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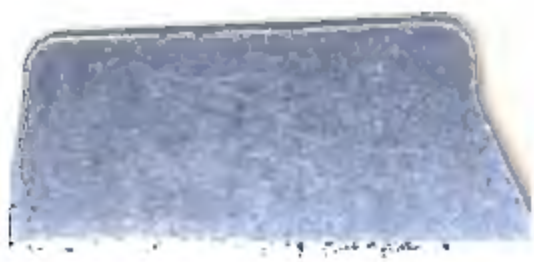

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Bentley

TALES

FROM

"BENTLEY."

LONDON:
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NEW BURLINGTON STREET.
1860.

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FATHER MATHEW.

BY P. McTEAGUE, ESQ.

WE Irishmen never like to overpraise ourselves. Modesty and diffidence are our acknowledged qualities; we are a retiring people, not prone to the throwing down of gloves and gauntlets; but, in the name of Erin, let me here challenge all the patentees and projectors under heaven to produce such an invention as the PLEDGE!

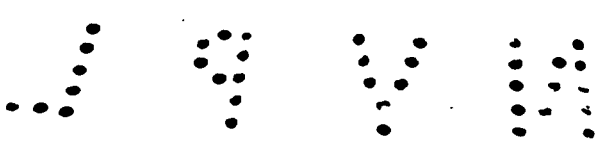
The PLEDGE—what is the PLEDGE? Reader, I will endeavour to explain it to you. It is an invention for neutralising poison, and converting drunkards into sober, honest, and industrious men; and surely, if any invention in the world be entitled to the everlasting gratitude and admiration of mankind, it is that which is now unfolding its surprising effects in Ireland.

We all know, alas! how ancient is the invention of wickedness; but to hit upon the happy means of *counteracting a deeply-rooted* vice, to administer an

antidote which shall overcome the temptations of the ignorant and abandoned, defy the scoffs of the hardened, the sneers of the doubting; to bring peace where discord reigned, and substitute the comforts and decencies of life for the bitterness of despair;—if *this* be not a great, a happy, and glorious work, deserving to be exalted above all inventions, then indeed might the beautiful Queen of our green isle lay down her harp in despair, and moisten its strings with her tears! But no, thank Heaven! she sits erect; her poor sons daily proclaim their joy; *they swerve not from their vow;* and the point is settled, with a few exceptions, by a nation's gratitude to good FATHER MATHEW.

In order to form some idea of the previous state of Ireland as to excesses in drinking, which, while they degraded the poor, surely disgraced the rich a hundred times more, we have only to dip into such a work as Sir Jonah Barrington's, or listen for a few minutes to relations which are ever in readiness; such, for instance, as the three squires from the west going up to Dublin, and for a month together drinking *seventy-two tumblers* of whiskey punch per diem between dinner and bedtime; or Mr. A, who used to sup so regularly that his bill was never known to vary:

Supper	0s.	2d. (meaning four biscuits)
20 tumblers of punch ..	10	0
	10	2



Or Mr. B, never going out to shoot without three pints of whiskey in his pockets, which he always finished, *shooting steadily!* Or the roaring dinners and jollifications of Mr. C, and his round dozen of guests, all extended in due time upon the floor, except two heroes, D and E, who on one great occasion drank seven bottles of claret more between them, and beginning then to complain of a great "chill in their stomachs" from that *thin cold French stuff*, finished a bottle of brandy between them, and walked home (somehow or other).

It may be easily imagined what a fine "moral effect" such proceedings as these must have had upon the servants of such a *gentry*, their tenants, and such as had the misfortune to be their dependents. Without such examples, indeed, our poor countrymen were sufficiently abandoned to the vice of drinking, and, what was worse, seldom drank without fighting. Hence our degraded peasantry were for ever engaged in broils and murders, it being an inevitable consequence that when a man was beaten in a drunken fray, many others would mingle in the fight; nor did the quarrel always terminate on the spot, but was frequently perpetuated in deadly feuds, as between "Shanivests" and "Hinavests," "Flinns" and "Joyces," "Gows" and "Poleens," and hundreds, nay, thousands of others. And, as quarrels *first arose in the shebeens*, or whiskey-houses, *so, also, still more* dangerous conspiracies were

arranged in these very places; and these, too, often artfully suggested by the publicans themselves for the base purpose of drawing crowds of these infatuated ignorant wretches to their houses. For instance, during the insurrection of the Terry-alts in the county of Clare, in the year 1831, the quantity of whiskey sold *exceeded all belief!* and are not the records of that year applicable to those of previous centuries? I appeal to the historian, to the traveller, to the annals of the bar, and expostulation of the pulpit; to the confessions of multitudes when in the extremity of mental anguish from the commission of crime, or trembling upon the verge of eternity at the foot of the gallows, or languishing in chains, heart-broken, in our far-distant colonies; fearlessly would I appeal to all, and ask whether this description is not strictly true? And, if true, without some great counteracting event, what hope could be entertained for the improvement and regeneration of Ireland?

And yet at this very period, when every benevolent heart is expanding with joy amidst the mighty change, there are people—and grieved am I to add many—who raise their hands, and turn up their eyes, exclaiming, "Ah, we see how it is! we shall be all murdered! We are on the eve of another rebellion!" And so we certainly are, or rather in the *thick of it;* but, thank Heaven! it is a rebellion *against poverty*, rags, and poison. All which these

people, too long accustomed to have everything their own way, know *perfectly well themselves.*

But now let us return to Father Mathew. From the 1st of January, 1838, this excellent man has laboured with an ardour never surpassed. At first his progress was slow, and his constancy must have been severely tested; for he had not the great body of the Catholic priesthood with him *then;* but *now* he has their zealous co-operation. In fact, the circle was discouragingly small at first, but has extended itself in a manner which, while it gladdens the soul of the philanthropist, confounds all statistical calculation, and electrifies the brewer, the distiller, and the publican. It is known that nearly five hundred whiskey-shops have been abandoned in Cork alone, and hence we may judge of other places; and also, that FIFTEEN HUNDRED THOUSAND members have already taken the pledge.

Having had the gratification of a personal introduction to Father Mathew, upon an occasion when many thousand people eagerly presented themselves to take the pledge, I might here, perhaps, be induced to trespass too much in describing the scene, as this has been so frequently done before. However, as some parts of it may not be so generally known, I may add that the exhortation, when the people had thrown themselves down upon their knees, *was very appropriate* and well delivered, de*picting the miserable state* of the drunkard's life,

and contrasting it with the comforts of peace and security.

"I wish you," he said, "to make a fair trial of the change. Think not, however, I have any design to take an undue advantage of this great impulse. All I ask of you is to give to temperance a *fair trial;* steadily to adhere to it for a portion, at least, of your lives, and to mark what happy changes it will effect, not only in your bodily health, but your worldly comforts. I am not afraid of you if you will give it such a trial; and, after that, if any one of you should regret his choice, or see cause to retract the engagement he is about to make, let him send me back his card and his medal, and I will at once erase his name from the register."

To all which the kneeling multitude cried out, "WE WILL KEEP IT!"

"I rejoice to hear you say so," said Father Mathew; "and now let each of you repeat after me as follows." When, further elevating his voice, he pronounced the words of the pledge, pausing as indicated ("—") for the general response.

But how can I describe the effect of these bursts of a thousand voices, or the variety of emotions depicted on the faces below? Here were, indeed, pictures, *véritables tableaux vivants*, which the curious in physiognomy might have scrutinised with an interest never, perhaps, more strongly experienced. *Men upon* whose countenances I saw the marks of

shame and sorrow; women in a kind of maudlin dreamy state, who threw up their arms, and clapped their hands over their heads, as if bewailing the last "drops of comfort" they had taken; and here and there groups of the poorest peasants from the far west, from the recesses of that rocky shore, whose frowning cliffs protect us from the liquid mountains of the restless Atlantic; these men, peculiar in dress, and of uncivilised appearance, and whose matted hair nearly concealed their faces — such figures as these could not but form a singularly interesting portion of the multitude. From my knowledge of these people, of their wild glens and lonely haunts, I should say that probably not one of them in fifty understood a word of English, and yet there was a language evidently speaking within them, as their lips never ceased to move; and immediately after the ceremony most of them rushed to Father Mathew to touch his person, or be touched by him; doubtless considering *that touch* as the perfection of virtue against future temptation. We now come to THE PLEDGE.

FATHER MATHEW.—"I promise"—(the multitude answer in various tones, but in one eager breath) —"I promise"—"that so long"—"as I continue" —"a member"—"of the teetotal"—"temperance society"—"to abstain"—"from all"—"intoxicating liquors,"—"*except used* medicinally;"—"and by *advice*"—"*and example*"—"to discountenance

the cause and practice" — "of intemperance in others."

The reverend gentleman then added, "God bless you, and enable you to keep the pledge you have taken!"

This is a faint outline only of the ceremony as I witnessed it. It is obvious that medals could not be distributed on such an occasion, or the names of eight, ten, thirty, or forty thousand people accurately registered. In Limerick the attempt was made by fourteen gentlemen; but they were obliged to abandon the task, and a far better plan has been adopted; those who have taken the pledge have now to renew the engagement before their respective parish priests, who are provided with the requisite cards and medals, on payment of a shilling.

Here again it has been loudly complained of by those righteous people, now all at once appearing *horror-struck* at the idea of Irishmen becoming sober, that a shilling should be charged for what only costs about fourpence! But when the great expense of the registry—in which business alone two clerks are engaged wholly at Father Mathew's expense; his journeys, and his well-known acts of charity; the medals of pure silver,—for which he will take no payment,—and which he has given on particular occasions; nay, one of gold, of the value *of ten pounds*, which he presented to a Catholic *bishop: when* these are all taken into account, it

will surely be obvious to any unprejudiced person that not only is there no profit from this source, but that a handsome private income is *entirely devoted* by this excellent man to the highest object of his ambition in this world—the regeneration of his countrymen.

The personal labour which Father Mathew encounters is almost incredible. When at home in Cork his work commences at seven in the morning, and, with the exception of short intervals, seldom ceases before twelve at night. During the late inclement winter it is well known how many entire days he was exposed in the open air, and bare-headed from morning till night, and often (as I can testify) in the worst of weather administering the pledge, and yet we have never heard that his constitution has been at all injured, nor does his appearance indicate anything but health and contentment. A powerful argument this in favour of temperance!

No wonder, then, under all these circumstances, that his reputation should increase so rapidly; for the people soon began to argue themselves into a firm belief that the good father must have received preternatural aid, and be gifted by more than human power; and, in proportion as this conviction spread among them, we may be sure that Paddy's *ingenuity* did *not diminish* the impression. Some *rather singular coincidences*, too, did actually occur;

several people who had broken their pledges were seized with sickness or madness — synonymous disorders with many drunkards. Of these some, filled with remorse, returned by themselves to Cork, while others were carried back by their friends, and, overwhelmed with alarm and shame, were re-admitted and cured, as they expressed it, "for ever." The very medals were by numbers supposed to possess a charm in healing, and were believed to effect miracles on being applied to sores, &c.

Imagine, therefore, the journeyings to Cork in 1839. It was then, indeed, that the living tide rolled onwards; the roads were thronged with pilgrims, coaches, carts, and cars and horses were heavily laden with them; and even boat-loads were landed from all parts of the coast. But how different the approach from the return! Going, as much whiskey was drunk by all as could be paid for or carried, sometimes a *little more*. "But sure, wasn't it for the last time?" Returning, *not a single drop*. The steps of all were resolved, and their appearance, without exception, (and I have met thousands on the roads,) displayed the utmost pride and satisfaction; and, though they freely admitted what they had gone through in their last fond embraces of their "darlint dhrop;" yet, assuming a more than solemn air, they would add, "Wor they *ever so hearty*, or maybe bhlind dhrunk itsilf, sure *the bare sight* of his rivirince brought 'em to rason,

an' down they wint an ther two knees studdy an' illigant."

Considering, therefore, the fruitful inventions of my dear countrymen, and the number of marvellous tales carried home by these pilgrims, it is easy to imagine with what avidity a narrative of their adventures would be devoured, particularly when once more seated by their cabin fires at night, as "the neighbours, ould an' young, male an' famale, 'ud be comin' in, to hear all the great news, an' take a look at the caard an' medal."

And, as Paddy *loves* a wonder, and *must* have a wonder, and cannot live *without* a wonder, no wonder that tales *sufficiently wonderful* should soon be flying about the country, particularly as the supply of the article is invariably equal to the demand, however great: another striking proof of the inexhaustible resources and fertility of Ireland, when aided by the inventive faculties of her sons. In short, even St. Patrick himself seemed to shake upon his pedestal, while, by sheer native talent, Father Mathew was invested with acquirements in fortune-telling, and even necromancy, which he himself is certainly the very last man in the world to acknowledge or covet.

But how can Father Mathew help himself? Even the village poets caught the inspiration, and celebrated him in endless verses of *endless* metres, which *the ballad-singers* were neither slow to profit *by nor re-echo in nasal* harmony.

I have at this moment several of these mag ficent effusions, and have been thinking how I co best contrive to give my readers some idea of th To transcribe them all would be impossible, for t would fill a number of the Miscellany. I will g however, a few examples.

"By the Lord's command we 'll join heart and hand,
Let envy and malice away from us flee;
We 'll join holy timp'rance with Father Mathew,
And live in contintmint in ERIN MACHREE!"

Or, what if we should avail ourselves of the good orthodox (how I love that word!) way, by which, those good old times (flown, alas! for ever), capital judgment might be concluded of a house producing a few bricks taken promiscuously from walls? I flatter myself this idea is a splendid or so our readers may now be at ease, and form th own estimate of the value of my collection temperance ballads (increasing, I am happy to sa by the following specimens. Here (as one mig call it, brick first) is a piece of the sublime—a s of poetical earthquake:

"God bless each member that wears a medal;
I hope for ther souls' sake they 'll not brake trust;
The general day whin St. Michael will sound the trump
The rocks will SMASH, and the earth will BURST."

The next to be produced is called "THE ROGUI *PUBLICAN.*"

"Without a coat he 'd make you go,
Without a breechès to put *an;*
His pint and glass will be your wo
If you don't shun the publican."

Then comes what people of good breeding and elicate feelings would call a *wipe* at the landlady. Scene, Limerick.)

"One evening, when passing up the Irish town,
A publican's wife I heard grievin' alone,
In mournful accents crying, 'OCH HONE!
I 'm pining in anguish this fortnight.
Sure now for whiskey we 're getting no call;
There is no use in housekeeping at all;
For the world is wheeling like a ball!
My husband in fashion could dress like a squire,
With a watch in his fob, and his shins by the fire,
A pipe in his gob,—without pinshon or hire,
IS SHUDE MAR A REE MERU GA GRAUVER! *
The time of the election 'twas easy for me
To sit to a breakfast, bread, butter, and tea,
To eat a fresh egg, with me cup on me knee,
Tinkling about on me saucer,'" &c.

I would transcribe the whole of this most beautiful llad were it not so affecting, and rendered more thetic, too, by its innocent simplicity; for she tually concludes thus,—as the poet avers; who d been evidently listening to her moans—musical d melancholy, no doubt, and tender as those of a ing swan:—

* *Merry and* social as a king.

"She swore a BIG OATH that she 'd rather be dead,
Than eating the 'lumpers,' insted of good bread;
Her stomach is weak, and a pain in her head,—
For hungar is a killing disorder!"

We must next prepare for a burst of the tremendous in a ballad called the "Drunkard's Reformation."

"In hell the devil now does bark
At this holy priest, who dwells in Cork;
He would wound his soul wid his firy fork,
But he cannot hurt our CHAMPIAN!"

Here is another most sublime and ingenious ballad, the descriptions vivid, and sentiments tender, —"FAREWELL TO DRUNKNESS,"—(reminding one also that it is time to bid farewell to one's extracts).

"Farewell to my rags! for at one time my coat,
And wastecoat, an' brichis no buttons had got;
I drest on a mornin' with needle an' thred,
And cut thim of with a scissors when ready for bed.
Farewell to you, whiskey, i bid you good-b'ye;
I 'll continue to temp'rance till the day that i die!"

But no, no! impossible to leave out my charming friend, "PAT SOBER," the pride of the Limerick Press, and the glory of the Penny Temperance Magazine, No. 12. We must have a little bit of *him*, at least, if we cannot have him "holus bolus" *(as they say)*. He is too choice a fellow to pass *by*.

"My name is PAT SOBER, a temperate man,
A great toper once, reform'd I am;
For the temperance cause I give in my note,
That no ardent spirits should go down my throat.
Now a sweet cup of tea, and a good lunch of toast,
Is far better, I say, than this ugly grim ghost.
He 's shockingly ghastly, and ugly to see;
Let 's change him, my friends, for a bowl of coffee;
And, if in your stomach he 's likely to kick,
Knock him down in the sconce with a quartern brick;
Should he not be kilt—so strong his old pate is—
Why, hit him again with some pork and pitaties,
They may laugh if they please—OCH A GRA MACHREE STIG—
For we know who has got the fat side of a pig.
Let the drunkard come look at our beef in its teens,
And a nice pig's profile, garnished round with young greens;
Some apple pitaties arranged on a plate;
Two fat little chickens quite cosy and nate;
And at Christmas a goose, or a fat little duck,
While a temperate neighbour walks in for pot-luck.
We make fools of gooseberries, scalded by rule;
He that 's scalded with whiskey is a great whiskey fool," &c.

Having been lately on a visit to my worthy and excellent old friend, Mr. Terence Coffy, I was much gratified to find his health greatly improved; for, though he has not become a "teetotaler," yet is he so deeply impressed with the importance of aiding the great change going on, that he has very properly resolved to allow no more whiskey-drinking in his house, and contents himself, like a sensible man *as he is, with a few glasses* of fine old Madeira; and

the change, to say nothing of the selection, being very much in accordance with my own taste, we got on remarkably well together.

We had nearly arranged the entire affairs of the nation; given our hearty approval to the happy marriage of our beloved Queen; decided that the Emperor of Russia was inclined to be troublesome; Mahomed Ali Pacha *plucky* and obstinate; Louis Philippe by no means the first man whose *chambers* did not exactly accommodate him as he *wished;* rejoiced over penny letters; puzzled ourselves with poor-laws and corporation acts, and nearly fell asleep over the *opium* question; when suddenly those well-remembered strains fell upon my ears, denoting, beyond all doubt, that my friend, Corney O'Hennessy (the glory of pipers), was not far off.

"Thank you, my friend," I said. "Good-by to politics and opium now; for I suspect we have something better in hand."

"Indeed I hope so," replied Mr. Coffy; "and, to confess the truth, this was the signal arranged between myself and Corney. He and three or four more of your old country cronies have been dining in my kitchen, and now I know that everything is in readiness for us. The women have (as they call it) settled the kitchen; the hearth is swept; and we shall find a couple of old easy chairs, one at each side of the fire. We shall have some amusement, I hope; but I warn you that if, according to your

usual propensities, you are looking for stories, that you will be out in your calculation, as these people can talk of nothing now but Father Mathew!"

"So much the better," I replied, and away we went.

We had not, in fact, very far to go; but it was worth a longer walk to look at such a kitchen as Mr. Coffy's; so clean, so well arranged, and so amply garnished with hams, bacon, and bright pewter plates. The old servants, and young ones too, so respectable; the guests looking so happy, and all doting upon the dear old master (cats and dogs included).

Advanced as the afternoon was, we made our *entrée* to the tune of "Patrick's day in the morning," played in his best style by Corney, all standing to receive us, and then came so many greetings and bows! Ah! how much do those great folks lose who think the humble beneath their notice! There is, after all, no difference in the conformation of the *human heart;* the same affections are common to all; and there often dwells a nobility beneath the frieze which might in vain be sought for under the most costly garments.

Corney was surpassing himself; but fair play is a jewel; he considerately stopped to let others indulge a little kindly display. Such *as*—

"*Your honour 's kindly welcome.*"—"Ah, thin, *we 're glad to see your honor* among us."—"Long

life to your honor."—"Never seen yer honor look so fresh!" and so on. Greetings and inquiries innumerable. At length, however, preliminaries being adjusted to general satisfaction, and the fire and the easy chairs looking extremely inviting, we took our seats, desiring all the rest to do the same.

"Well, Corney," I said, "now tell me how you are in earnest, my good fellow. How are the times with you? Mr. Coffy tells me you have been to Cork. I trust you have seen no cause to regret your pilgrimage."

"In troth, no, your honor; I never was better in my life, thank God! an' I would not give up my medal and card at this minute for a hundred pounds! To be sure, yer honor, the new 'thrade' may not be quite so lively to some people; but what thin? Everything goes an more steady, as one may say. The good bread, an' the warm tay an' coffee, keeps all shnug an' comfortable; an' sure the *bellowses* costs nothing now towards what they did, and they bursting under the elbow wid the *shpring of the whiskey!*"

This was an exordium,—a preliminary flourish,—during which I had been looking round, and was happy to perceive one of the benches had been *coaxed* a little nearer to the fire, and that it was occupied by five knowing fellows in their way,—*Tom Donovan*, the ploughman; Billy Hayes, the *herdsman; Paddy* Kennedy, and James Curtin, and

his brother Michael, all neighbours, and teetotalers, my old friend showing a decided partiality to the disciples of Father Mathew, or, as his name is more generally pronounced by these people, MATCHEW. At this period, indeed, we might have been justly called "The Wide-awake Club," as all sat open-mouthed enjoying Corney's preparations to surprise me, who they well knew would not stick at trifles; and truly I began to think some of those collisions were not far distant, which like flint and steel, or the contents of a more modern match-box, produce a flash of light from rough materials. And so, thought I to myself, this will do! No sooner had Corney O'Hennessy ended these remarks than there was a general exclamation in favour of temperance. They were all more comfortable,—nothing could induce them to return to the whiskey, &c.

"Most delightful news indeed!" I said. "Pray, can any of you tell me what has become of that poor unfortunate wretch, Paddy Limekiln?"

"Yes, indeed, yer honour, I believe I can," said Tom Donovan; "for I know him very well these ten years, and the devil a bigger ruffian about the counthry, except p'rhaps Paddy the blackguard of Killaloe, an' he wint too, yer honour, but couldn't get through Limerick the first offer, and kem half way back, an' got a few *more* shillin's from a good gint*leman, and then he made* his road good to Cork, *an' is a dacent boy now;* an' before he wint, yer

honour knows he 'd knock any one down for a glass of whiskey, an' that he would. But by the same token, sure that other fellow's raal name was Paddy Magrath, an' he was called Limekil' always, because he was sleeping about the limekil's for warmth, or maybe up the enthries, or in the haggards, under ricks and haystacks, but never in a bed,—by rason whin he got a shillin' or two, he dhrank it all out at wanst, an' whin the time of night came an, never had a pennypiece for the dhry lodgin'. Well, how in the wide world it was, meself does not know, but all on a suddint he wint aff, an' by one manes or other, an' nobody knows how, but great shtrugglin' it was, I 'm sure, he got to Cork, an' tuk the plidge, an' was cured by Father Matchew, an' so towards home agen, quite a different soort of a man entirely. An' on his journey back he fell in wid a lady in a fine jaunting car, who, seeing he was tired, an' bate up for the hunger, gave him a shillin' or two out iv her pocket; an' the lady saw Paddy's medal, and siz she to Paddy, 'When you 've thried the timprance a month or two,' siz she, 'I hope your *nose* will be more the colour of your medal,' siz she, 'nor *that*,' siz she, an' she pointing wid her finger to the comb of a cock on a hape of stones!—an' she laughing when she driv on; for in troth Paddy's nose was red *enough*. So by an' by Paddy comes to a shebeen *house, kep' by* a jolly young widdy, an' marches into *the kitchen* wid a 'God save all here!' an' there

stood the lan'lady, wid a cap an' fine ribbons on her, if you plase, an' full of her jokes; an' siz Paddy, siz he, 'May I thrubble you, ma'am, for a small loaf an' a pwint o' milk?' siz he; an' wid that he lays down a shillin', an' got his change. 'Ah, now, is it milk by itself for such a beautiful *shnout* as you carry on the middle of your face?' siz she. 'O then, good luck to you, an' let me put a naggin of the raal ould Dublin into it for the warmth,' siz she; 'for it 's beginning to turn blue,' siz she, 'an' I 'll not sharge for it even,' siz she.—'No, 'deed, ma'am,' siz Paddy. 'I can't do that same,' siz he; 'for I 've been wid Father Matchew,' siz he, 'an' be the same token, here 's my medal,' siz he; 'but, as the day is getting cowld, if you 'll give it a little bit of a *bile* in the skillet there, I 'll be for ever obleeg'd to ye, ma'am,' siz he.—'Av coorse, you shall have yer own way, an' welcome, my good man,' siz she; 'so sit down an' take an air of the fire, an' make yerself comfortable,' siz she. An' so you see, sir, wid that Paddy Lime-kil' sot himsilf down, an' out wid his short pipe, an' redden'd it wid a coal, an' was enjoying himsilf quite asy an' pleasant, when all av a suddint, what should dhrive up past the dure but a coach that was full of passhingers in an' out, an' Paddy should get up to see did he know anybody an it; an' so whin the landlady saw him outside the dure staring afther the coach, *what should come* into her head but the *divil's own notion to interfare* wid Father Matchew's

work! 'I'll spoil his spoort for this wanst,' siz she, 'anyhow,' siz she; an' up wid hersilf, an' popp'd a naggin of whishkey into Paddy's milk, an' poured it into a jug, and sot it on the windy to cool. By an' by, whin Paddy was done looking afther the coach, an' it out of sight, he comes in back for his milk, an' bein' a'most kilt wid de druth, swallyed it all down in no time—an' if he did, bad luck to it, up comes the ould tashte an' shmell ov de whishkey! 'Och, murdher! murdher! murdher!' siz Paddy. 'I'm ruined agen!' siz he; 'here's ructions of whishkey,' siz he, 'coming up de throat of me!' siz he. An' the fine gay landlady began to laugh till the ribands shuk an her cap, an' siz she, 'What's the matter wid you, my honest friend?' siz she.—'No frind av mine you are, ye desavingest woman of the world!' siz Paddy. 'Is it the pace of my poor sinful sowl yer begrudging me?' siz he. 'An' is it this the way yer thinkin' to bate Father Matchew out an' out?' siz he. An' wid that he gother himself for another shtart, an' bowlted clane out av the dure, an' away wid him back agen to Cork as fast as he could pelt, an' never stopped till he kem to Father Matchew's house, an' his rivirence waiting for him outside! 'Come in, my poor fellow,' siz he, 'an' take the plidge agen by all manes,' siz he. 'I don't blame you the laste,' siz he; 'but take care of *thim soort of* women another time,' siz he. 'An' *now,' siz he,* 'Paddy, yer twice as shtrong for a tee-

totaler as you was before, an' you may go home wid my blessing. An' whisper!' siz he; 'mind my ordhers now,' siz he. 'Call in to that shebeen house as quick as you can, an' see what 's become of the gay widdy,' siz he, 'an' whether she 'll propose you another naggin,' siz he. So Paddy away wid himself to face the road agen, an' whin he kem to the widdy's house, he 'd like to be smudder'd wid th' hapes of people in the road, roaring an' crying; but av coorse he did as he 'd bin bid, an' squeesh'd himself into the house, an' there was the gay widdy *stritched dead on a table,* an' the neighbours all *wakeing* her. The Lord save us!"

"Tare-an-ounters!"—"A wough, wough!"—"Well, well, well!"—"The Lord be praised!" Such, and many more, were the general exclamations re-echoed by the females, who, though pretending at times to be very busy, never lost a syllable.

MR. COFFY.—"God bless me, Tom Donovan, but that 's a terrible story to be true."

DONOVAN.—"Devil a word of a lie in it, sir. That 's juist as the boy's own friends tould me."

MR. COFFY.—"But did any of ye hear what became of the five millers from O'Brien's Bridge? Were *you* not living there at the time, Paddy Kennedy?"

PADDY KENNEDY.—"Sure I was, sir, an' knew them all *as one as my own* brothers. Not to say *them boys was so bad; but* you see, sir, whin the

masther wanted the maal for market, maybe they 'd be away dhrinking, or the shtones 'udn't be drest fair, or somethin' contrary. 'So,' ses he, 'boys, I 'm thinkin',' ses he, 'it 'ud be well done o' ye to go 'way to Cork an' take the plidge,' ses he. An' they hadn't the laste objiction agin it; only they tould him they considhered themsilves a little too *saft* for foot thravelling, and had no money for coach or car. 'Oh, thin,' ses the masther, 'if that 's yer only objiction, boys, I 'll lend what money 'll do ye,' ses he, 'an' you shall go on a car,' ses he, 'an' I 'll pay that same car,' ses he; 'an' don't ye think but Denny Burke 'ud bring you there in no time,' ses he, 'an' back agen? an' who knows but Denny might take the plidge himsilf,' ses he,—'and wouldn't that be the only best thing ever happened him?' ses he. So the masther sent for Denny, an' agreed wid him for the hire of horse an' car for Cork, an' put plinty hay and shtraw for all to sit upon, an' saw thim aff quite pleasant. But a'deed, to tell nothin' but the thruth, it was a tearing journey they had, an' a power of whishkey they dhrank, an' Denny the worst av 'em all; for they 'd be all lyin' down in the shtraw drunk together, an' the horse stoppin' to ate grass, an' they not knowin' wor they goin' to Cork or Amereky! an' Denny swearin', an' blasphamin', and cursin', and tearin' *about, an'* 'didn't care a pin's head for Father *Matchew, an'* 'ud pitch his rivirince to the devil!

The Lord save us, amin! An' so whin they wor within ten miles of Cork, Denny stopped all at wanst, an' called out, 'Boys, don't be making Judies av yersilves, but wait here at this neat house for the day, anyhow!' But the men wor not such fools, an' tould him to hould his tongue, an' drive 'em to Father Matchew, for 'the divil's skivver to the bit av 'em they 'd go back, or make more delay.' An' thin he swore an' cursed worse than ever, an' called Father Matchew all the names he could think av, till he got red in the face, an' thin blue, an' thin black,—*an' black it kep'*—(the Lord be praised!)—an' then they thought he 'd die. But it was capers he was cutting all about the road, an' he jumpin', an' kickin', an' tearin' his clothes to bits,—an' he alive, yer honour, (saving yer prisince,) with *black keerogues*, an' ugly vermin of all kinds an' soorts, an' he roarin' an' bawlin' jist like a madman. But, mad as he was, he knew well enough what was the only best thing he could do, an' so he tuk his baste out of the car, an' whipped up on his back, an' tore away for Cork for the bare life. An' whin he got there, there was Father Matchew sure enough at his dure waiting for him! 'Is that you, Denny Burke?'—'It is, plase yer rivirence.'—'Don't they call you the mad dhriver? Come down aff yer horse,' ses Father *Matchew.*—'*Oh, plase* yer rivirence's glory, *sure I 'm not fit to come* nigh you,' ses Denny.

'I 'm swarmin' wid black keerogues, an' vermin av all soorts,' ses he, 'an' they bitin' an' tearin' me to pieces,' ses he; 'an inch thick they are wid me,' ses he.—'Come down aff yer horse, as I bid you,' ses Father Matchew. 'Now come yer ways in,' ses he, 'till I look at you,' ses he. So in went Denny, cryin', an' clappin' his hands, an' prayin' his rivirince 'ud forgive his sins, an' all he sed agin him behind his back. 'Hould yerself still a minute,' ses Father Matchew, 'till I see'll ye be a thrue repintant,' ses he. 'I think you will,' ses he; 'maybe you 've suffered enough by this,' ses he. 'It 's dust yer covered with now,' ses he. 'Go outside, an' shake yersilf well in the wind,' ses he. So Denny did as he was ordherd, an' the whole shtreet was bhlinded wid the dhust, by rason the keerogues and vermin was all turned into black powdther!—the Lord save us! 'Now come in agen,' ses Father Matchew, 'an' take the plidge.' And so he did, an' received his companions sound, an' whole, an' hearty; an' not wan o' them could bear sight or shmell of whiskey since. *An' every keerogue was a devil for certain!*'

Another general exclamation as before, and a significant exchange of nods between Mr. Coffy and myself. The ball was fairly up!

"'In troth, then, yer honour, an' that 's all a thrue story,' said Jemmy Curtin; 'for I heerd tell *a'most the* whole av it before. An' faix it 's *somethin' like* what happened to a third cousin of

my own aunt Doolaughty's by her mother's side, an' she a dacent 'esponsible woman enough, only she'd take a sup now an' agen, till she wint to Cork. Well, she was jist goin' to take the plidge, whin she all at wanst thought it 'ud be the grief of the world to give up the dhrop *out an' out.* So she made bould to ask Father Matchew, might she jist have the taste of two shmall glasses av sperrets in the coorse av the twinty-four hours, an' then she 'ud take any plidge or oath his rivirence proposed, not to dhrink *more?* Father Matchew, who is a raal gentleman, and mighty civil to everybody, an' av coorse not less so to the ladies, gav' her the liberty, an' welcome, *if she found no further objections hersilf.* An' so aff she wint wid hersilf mighty quick an' aisy to the public-house, an' called for a glass, an' aygar enough she was wid it up to her mouth, all in a hurry, like a cat takin' a lep a'top av a mouse. But if she was, be me sowkins! no mouth av hers could she find convanient for the whiskey!—for ye see, yer honor, it was all drawn away, an' twishted a'most close to her ears! an' bad luck to the dhrop she could pitch into it, wid all the thries she med. So she began to crass an' bless hersilf, an' she cryin' like mad, an' ran back to Father Matchew. 'Ah!' ses he, 'I thought you'd find somethin' wrong about takin' two glasses,' ses he, 'afther you bein' here,' *ses he. An' so he* put his hand to her *head, an' soon sthraitened* her mouth for her.

'Now,' ses he, 'will you go down on yer knees, an' take the plidge out an' out,' ses he, 'like a dacent woman?' ses he. An' what d'ye think she did, the crathur! but wanted to bargain for *wan* glass, insted of the two! An' so Father Matchew sent his own boy out for a half naggin, an' poured it out into a beautiful clane glass wid his own hands, an' she tuk it quite smart an' bould. But what 'ud ye think? Why, thin, by this binch I 'm sittin' on, the moment she thried to drink it, the dickins a sup of whishkey was in the glass at all, but, insted of the sperrets, it was full av *red maggits!* An' afther that she tuk the plidge for good an' all, an' can't bear the sight of a large or shmall glass since!"

"Wonderful!—wonderful!—most wonderful!" I exclaimed, amidst a similar chorus from the rest, and a most significant wink of the eye from Mr. Coffy.

Now Corney O'Hennessy was not the man to sit "mute and inglorious" by, while such stories were going; his head had been evidently at work, and his tongue aching again to maintain his proper distinction.

"Ah, yer honor," said he, "what pains and thrubble some av our poor boys used to give themselves to get at the whishkey,—like Mick Hourigan, *that yer honor* may remimber."

"*Ay, indeed,* I 've heard of that fellow's pranks,"

I replied. "Can he still be alive? I thought he had drunk himself to death."

CORNEY.—"An' so he did a'most, yer honor; but he's safe *now*. Did yer honor ever hear how he got the whishkey at Spancil Hill fair?"

"Oh, I've not heard that story. Pray tell it to me, Corney."

CORNEY.—"Well, yer honor, Mick was called '*Barrileah*,' because he made a barrel of himsilf in regard to the dhrink; an' on a fair-day at Spancil Hill, Mick coaxed his brother to let him go with him. He hadn't a copper in his pocket, to be sure, but he'd 'run chance,' anyhow; so he wandered about scratching his head till he got a glass of whiskey from a frind, that made his throat ache for more. So what did he do but goes to his brother and begged the loan of the fine new frieze riding-coat he had, which he knew well enough would hide his own ragged coatee. His own hat bein' purty dacent, and his shoes an' stockings, the next thing was to borry a small book, and pin, an' ink-bottle from a kind-hearted landlady, and then in he went into the fair, lookin' mighty knowin' an' clever, like a jobber, an' so slap in into the thick of the farmers an' their pigs. 'God save ye, gintlemen,' ses Mick; 'did ye sell?' ses he.—'Musha! no 'ndeed, we did not,' ses one. 'I 'm comin' here this forty year wid my pigs, *an' I never seen the* like of this of a dull *fair. There 's nothin' doing*, good or bad, in it,' ses

he; an' all sed, 'That 's thrue.'—'Well, now,' ses Mick, 'I 'm a kimmishner of pigs from Limerick, jist aff the coach,' ses he, 'an' must do a great deal of business for the conthracthurs in a little time,' ses he; 'so I 'll jist give you a thrial,' ses he. 'And what 'll you take for that one?' ses he.—'Two pounds ten shillings,' ses the man. Mick knuckled the pig mighty clever an' knowin'. 'Ah, that 's too much; but it 's gettin' late—I 'll be even wid you at a word.'—'How much?'—'Two pounds five shillings.'—'Well, I 'll be long sorry to stand huckstherin' wid the likes o' you, so have her.' Mick marked the pig, an' out with his book and pen. 'What 's yer name?'—'Paddy Gorman.'—'Enthered white pig, red ×, Paddy Gorman, two pounds five shillings. Come, come, now, yer sowl,' says Mick, 'let 's come into this tint. Who ever h'ard of a dhry baargin? Here, landlady, get this gintleman an' me a half pint of the right stuff.' Mick put his hand in his pocket, as if to pay. 'O no, by no manes,' says Mr. Gorman; 'I 'll pay.'—'Well, have it so,' says Mick; 'but take the sixpence out of the money when I 'm paying you; an' mind, Mr. Gorman, be at this very tint in two hours, an' I 'll pay all at wanst,' ses he, 'for I am very exact,' ses he. So Mick went away agin, an' the man praising him up to the skies as a mighty dacent honorable *kimmishner;* and Mick having struck out his plans *so well,* wint on till he bought eleven more pigs,

wetting every bargin, till the two hours wor up, an' the poor farmers kem for ther money, whin there they found Mr. Hourigan stretched on the broad of his back on the flure, an' he bhlind dhrunk, without motion. An' so whin night kem on, what could they do, the crathurs, but lose their sixpence apiece, an' dhrive their pigs back home agen!"

"Oh! that 's the very man," I said. "And has he really been to Father Mathew?"

"Yes, indeed, your honour, he wint; for his frinds persuaded him to it, an' agreed he should drink all the ways to Cork, if he 'd go, an' that 's what tuk him, yer honor. But if it did, he wint back o' the pledge, and mad he grew, and got a turr'ble twisht av his head, an' he *beginnin' to ate his own shoulders*—the Lord be praised! So they tied him on a car this next turn, an' tuk him to Father Matchew for another offer; an' the moment Mick saw his rivirince, he began to tremble an' shake, an' down on his knees he wint, an' tuk the pledge agen; an' ses he, 'Oh! plase yer rivirince,' ses he, 'maybe I 'd be going asthray agen,' ses he. —'Do you think so?' ses Father Matchew. 'I 'll be bail for you this time,' ses he. So wi' that he tuk a good hoult of his head betune his two hands, an' if he did, he gev it the raal squeedje; and when this was done three times, *Mick* was better than ever he *was in his life, an' would* rather take the dirty *ditch-wather now than fine* ould Dublin; an' he 's

getting mighty shnug, an' goin' to be married to a fine girl of the Moylans, with ten acres an' thirty pounds!

"But the divil so bothered a fellow yer honor ever heerd of as Sergeant O'Callaghan. Did yer honor go to Tralee this year?"

"Yes. I was at Tralee not long since; and a nice thriving town it is, with temperance rooms, and everything very comfortable. But what of Tralee and Sergeant O'Callaghan, Corney?"

"Oh, not a great deal, yer honor. But did yer honor take notice of the sergeant,—he that 's gettin' so many recruits for the arthillery?"

"O yes; I think I remember him,—a very tall muscular man,—a fine handsome-looking fellow."

"The very same, yer honor,—an' carries a beautiful swoord, an' a matther o' beyant fifty yards of ribands flying away ten yards behind him when he 's marchin' agen the wind, an' he six foot two and a half inches high in his shtockin' vamps."

"Ay, exactly,—that 's the same man. No one could be an hour in Tralee and not see him. But what of him, Corney? Do tell us."

CORNEY.—"Sure, yer honor, he 's a timprance man!"

"Impossible! How could a recruiting sergeant be a teetotaler? The thing seems out of the question. *He ought* rather to be a twenty-tumbler *man.*"

CORNEY.—"That 's thrue, yer honor—one might think so, certainly; but divil a word o' lie in it. Sergeant O'Callaghan is a teetotaler,—an' I 'll tell yer honor all about it. You see, sir, the sergeant has got more recruits than any other man, and marched twelve fine boys from the 'Reeks' into Cork, to be drafted on boord a 'thranshpoort' for the Ingees; an' so, yer honor, they had a merry march of it, an' dhrank plinty o' whishkey. But some of the recruits were sinsible lads, an' persuaded the rest to take the plidge; for ses one of them, 'Boys,' ses he, 'we 're goin' to the Ingees,' ses he, 'an' I 've heerd say it 's a very hot place,' ses he, 'an' burnin' an' scorchin' *without* the sperrets,' ses he; 'and so,' ses he, 'if yer all of one mind, ye 'll come to Father Matchew, an' thin we 'll be able for the Ingees,' ses he, 'an' keep ourselves cool there,' ses he. So they all agreed to take the plidge, but should first ask lave of the sergeant,—an' he so fair a man to dale with, that he didn't object in the laste, but said he was very glad of it, an' would go with 'em, an' show 'em the way; an' so whin the sergeant marched up wid his twelve men, there was Father Matchew sure enough standin' in the dure, an' maybe Sergeant O'Callaghan wasn't the very man would give him the fine *salute*, an' he, bowin' low to his rivirince, explained that these men of his wor goin' to *fight for her Majesty* in the Ingees, an' *wishing to resave the plidge* from his rivirince, he 'd

THE DOUBLE-BEDDED ROOM.

BY BON GAULTIER.

"WELL, after all," I exclaimed, "there are few things so comfortable as snug quarters in a good inn;" and, so saying, I drew up my chair a foot or so nearer the fire, and manifested the exuberance of my satisfaction and the soundness of the poker by reducing a superincumbent mass of the best Wall's-end to minute fragments. A ride of some eighty miles outside the mail in a biting November day had thrown me into that state of delicious languor, which disposes one to regard everything in the best light, and I had abandoned myself to the enjoyment of the pleasurable, so far as it was to be obtained in the best parlour of the head inn in the provincial town of Nibblington. A neat repast had feasted me "light and choice," and a second tumbler of brandy and water, "warm with," stood exhaling its fragrance at my elbow. The fire was in fine spirits, and went laughing and crackling merrily up the chimney; it took part in *the satisfaction* it afforded—we were sworn friends.

"*What* a glorious thing it is," I muttered to

myself, as I rested my heels upon the fender, and stretched myself backwards into my chair,—"what a glorious thing it is, this taking one's ease in one's inn! It hath a relish almost too fine for earth—it smacks of Elysium! You have cheated fate for once, given business the go-by, and left the anxieties that dog your footsteps daily, in the lurch. Here you are, 'yourself alone,'—none to thwart, to fret, to frown upon you,—with a few sovereigns in your pocket, you are yourself a king. How respectful is mine host!—he is your chancellor, and holds you tenderly in his keeping, as royal consciences are kept. The waiters, how obsequious!—'like angels, ever eager-eyed,'—these be your ministers, watchful to do your will all the more that the prospect of the *gratillity* to be secured thereby is ever vividly present to their imagination. The chamber-maids, your maids of honour, and honoured as maids,—lighting you to dreams of love and bliss, like second Heros, with warming-pan and bedroom candlestick of brass. Your bed—but, ecod! I never thought of that—and I started up and tugged the bell in considerable trepidation.

My call was answered by the appearance of one of those smirking animals that go about inns with towels over their left arms.

"Have you secured *a bed for* me?"

"*Yezzir.*" *I resolved the* dog should have an *additional half-crown for his* attention. "Sorry,

sir, could not let you have a room to yourself, sir."

"Eh, what!" I exclaimed, and my contemplated generosity sunk at once below zero.

"Single bedrooms all engaged, sir."

"The devil!"

"Yezzir,—full of lawyers, sir. Assizes this week—crowded—not a corner to cram a cat in."

"And where am I to be stowed away, pray?"

"Excellent apartment, sir—third story behind—two capital beds, well aired. Other gin'l'm'n very quiet, sir."

"Who or what is he?"

"Don' know, sir. Came here a week ago, sir—breakfasts at ten minutes to eight precisely—cup of coffee, sir, and half a roll—goes out, and comes home at eleven every night. Mute as a mouse—tried myself to draw him out—wouldn't work, sir. Strange man, sir—neither speaks nor eats—how he lives, can't tell—what he does, ditto—where he goes, a mystery as dark, as dark as *Omnibus*, sir."

"Hum! Queer fish, seemingly."

"Yezzir, singular man, sir—indeed, I may say, a very singular man, sir. Seems in rather low spirits, sir. Any more brandy and water, sir?"

I ordered a fresh supply of this terrestrial nectar, and flung myself into my chair with the air of a *man who feels* himself a victim to untoward destiny.

That this should have happened to me, of all men

in the world!—to me, who never could tolerate bed-fellows in my life!—slept with locked door and window fast, and not a soul within half a dozen rooms of me—me, whose chief motive for remaining single—my Marion was certainly a very, *very* charming creature!—I do half incline to believe, was the horror of having my old habit of loneliness invaded! Possibly the wretch snores. Oh, horrible! most horrible! Well, if I do strangle him, no enlightened jury *can* bring in a worse verdict against me than that of "justifiable homicide." Looks melancholy, too! Oh, your melancholy men have a trick of speaking in their sleep; and I shall be kept shuddering all night at his incoherent *ohs!* and *ahs!* It is positively too bad! And again I dashed the poker into the bowels of the fire, and stirred it fiercely. The exercise only threw my brain into a livelier state of activity, and my fancies assumed a darker hue. To be shut up in an out-o'-the-way room, in a confounded old rambling wilderness of an inn, with a fellow whom nobody knows anything about! to have your valise and breeches-pockets ransacked, their "*silver* lining turned out upon the night," while you are wooing the caresses of the drowsy god,—or, possibly, like the Irish member, to wake in the morning and find your throat cut! A *cold line seemed* to be drawn across *my weasand at the thought,* and I groaned inwardly. *Seizing my brandy and water,* I whipped it off at a

gulp; but it had lost its flavour,—was cold, vapid, ineffectual stuff, and left no relish on the palate. I sank into a reverie, a dull and quasi-collapse state of misery, on starting from which I found that the fire had sunk down to a few cinders and the ghost of a flame, which looked up for a moment, as if to reproach me for my neglect, and quietly went out. Conjuring up a smile at my fears,—a very hectic sort of an affair, indeed,—I called for a light, and, following the pilotage of the "cham'maid," was heralded along a succession of passages, and up a labyrinth of staircases, until I reached the room that had been selected as my dormitory.

Its dimensions were something of the smallest. Two beds, placed directly opposite each other, engrossed three-fourths of the apartment. They were divided by an alley of some four feet in breadth, at the end of which, in the window recess, stood a table with the usual appurtenances of mirror and carafes, and the window itself looked out upon Cimmerian darkness, and the devil knows what. The other furnishings consisted of certain cane chairs, whose appearance was anything but calculated to inspire confidence in their trustworthiness. "The rusty grate, unconscious of a fire," stood shivering in the yawning fireplace, above which a cloudy mezzotint, conveying the faintest possible intimation of a blasted *heath, with a* gibbet in perspective, decorated a wall, *which time* and damp had reduced from its primitive

shade of green to the most miscellaneous diversity of tints. Here was an appearance of things, not certainly the most favourable for dissipating the unpleasant feelings that had for some time been fretting my lesser intestines to the tenuity of fiddle-strings; but I put a bold face upon the matter, and, after a leisurely survey of the apartment, deposited myself in bed. Sleep, however, was not to be thought of till the arrival of the person who was to share the apartment with me, and I lay forming all sorts of speculations as to his probable appearance. At length, towards midnight, a heavy step sounded on the staircase, and I heard some one advancing with a stately tread to the room in which I lay. Now, then, for a solution of my uncertainty! I half raised myself on my elbow to examine the person that should enter. The door opened leisurely, and a figure advanced into the room, that increased rather than abated my perplexity. It was that of a tall, powerfully-built man, dressed all in black, with a cloak of the same colour about his shoulders, and as he held the candle before him as though he held it not, its light fell upon features of a character singularly impressive, but pale and blasted, as it were, with untold woe. His long raven hair fell away in masses from his forehead, like blackening pines upon a lightning-scathed *mountain* summit, and his eyes *burned with a dull,* moveless glare. He appeared *to be utterly* unconscious of my presence,

notwithstanding my endeavours to excite his attention by sundry admonitory coughs and hems. Finding these of no avail, I resolved to attack him more directly, and, in as indifferent a tone as I could muster, exclaimed,

"Good night, sir!"—no answer. "Good night, sir!" with a stronger emphasis—still not a word; and it was not till I had repeated the salutation several times that he turned his eyes upon me. And, oh! what an inward hell did that look reveal! In words that dropped like minute-guns from his lips, he said,

"I wish you *may* have a good night, sir.'

This was enough; I was thoroughly relieved of any desire for farther converse with a gentleman of this kidney; so he relapsed into his abstraction, and I into my pillow and my speculations.

I was fatigued, and would fain have slept, but this I soon found to be impossible. In vain I turned from left side to right, from right to left, and then in despair threw myself on my face, and dug my head into the pillow. I tried to think of discourses on political economy, of sermons on temperance, of all the most sovereign narcotics I could recall. I repeated the alphabet letter by letter, and then groped my way through the multiplication-table; but it was of no use. Sleep was not to be so cajoled. *The gentleman* in black had betaken himself to bed. *The room was* as dark as midnight could make it,

and I heard a sigh, and the curtains drawn closely round in front of where he lay. Strange precaution, I thought. What can he mean? Has he the same doubts of me that are haunting me with regard to him, and so wishes to place even the slight barrier of a piece of dimity between us? Or perhaps the gentleman is conscious of sleeping in rather an ungainly style,—tosses the bedclothes off him perhaps, or lies with his mouth agape, like a fish in the death-pang,—and may not wish the morning light to disclose his weakness? But this comfortable view of the matter soon faded away as the remembrance of his appearance pressed upon my vision. Those features so pale and rigid; that massive figure, trained in no ordinary toils; those eyes dead to all outward objects, and lighted up with fires that seemed inwardly consuming him, stared vividly before me. I saw him as he entered the room, and went through all the operation of undressing, with a motion merely mechanical. What could so have palsied the senses and the will? Was it remorse for some unutterable guilt that preyed upon his heart, or was he even then meditating some act of inexpiable crime? I was lying there alone, in darkness, with a felon, perhaps a murderer! And then his answer to my friendly salutation, "I wish you *may* have a good night, *sir!*" came back upon my ear. *May have a good night!* There was, then, a *doubt, which even he confessed.* I stirred in bed

with as much noise as possible, coughing at the same time, to see if I could elicit any corresponding sound from my opposite neighbour. But all was hushed. I could not even catch his breathing. Oh, I thought, he must have gone to sleep. He, at least, takes the matter easy. But still his words—"I wish you *may* have a good night, sir!"—haunted me. What was there to prevent my having a good night, but something of which he himself was alone conscious? The night was a quiet one, and our room too much out of the way to be visited by any of the usual sleep-dispelling noises of an inn. Would to Heaven it had been less so! Again I thought of the curtains drawn so carefully in front of his bed. Might he not behind them be preparing the knife, with which he was to spring upon my secure slumbers? I coughed louder than before, to assure him that I was still wakeful. This horrible fancy now took entire possession of my mind. His sepulchral, "I wish you *may* have a good night!" pealed a perpetual alarum in my ears. It was an intimation to settle accounts with the world.

He would not kill my unprepared spirit. Not he! He was a sentimental murderer, an amateur assassin, and Fate had kindly quoited me into his grasp. I lay riveted to my couch, expecting every moment to hear the curtains torn apart, and to feel his fingers *at my throat.* Every nerve and faculty was strained *to the utmost* pitch, till even the suspense grew more

fearful than the reality itself could have been. A deathlike stillness filled the chamber. Its "very hush and creeping" grew oppressive. The stirring of a mouse would have been worth worlds to me.

Worn out with this excitement, I fell into a perturbed and gasping slumber, and, on starting from it, my ear seemed to catch the expiring echo of a groan. It might, however, have only been the wind striking a favourite note in the crannies of the chimney. Day had by this time begun to break, and the gladsome light gave me courage to look out between my curtains. Those of the opposite bed were still down, and its inmate seemed locked in profound repose. I turned my eyes towards the window to strengthen myself by the sight of some cheering object against the anxieties that still hung about my mind, and found that it looked out upon a desolate court, commanding a prospect at the same time of which the leading features were some crazy old chimney-stacks. The sky was wet and weltering, and no sound of life was audible, except the occasional rattle of a cart, blended with the driver's whoop, rousing the echoes of the slumbering streets. The whole feeling of the time and place was as cheerless as possible; and, to complete my discomfort, a superannuated raven, a creature *worn with the throes of* luckless prophecy, *settled upon a chimney right* before my eyes, and

began croaking its monotonous chant of woe. Oh, how that eternal "caw! caw!" did chafe me, "mingling strangely with my fears," and presaging the coming on of some unknown horror! It threw my thoughts back into their old channel. Alarm, however, had now given place to curiosity, and I determined at all hazards to know more of the mysterious man who had occasioned me such a night of torture. I lay intent to catch the minutest sound, but in vain. Fine-ear himself, that hears the grass grow in the fairy tale, could not have detected the shadow of a breath. This, I thought, is the most unaccountable man I ever met with. He comes nobody knows whence, goes nobody knows where, eats nothing, drinks nothing, and says nothing,—and sleeps like no other mortal beneath the sun. I must and will sound the heart of this mystery.

Here was I, with fevered pulse and throbbing brow, after a night of agony, while the cause of my uneasiness was taking deep draughts of that "tired Nature's sweet restorer," of which his singular appearance and ominous words had effectually robbed me. It was not more strange than provoking. I could bear this state of things no longer, and discharged a volley of tearing coughs, as if all the pulmonary complaints of the town had taken refuge *in my individual* chest. Still there was not a *movement to* indicate the slightest disturbance on

the part of my tormentor. I sprang out of bed, and paced up and down the room, making as much noise as possible by pushing the chairs about, and hitching the dressing-table along the floor. Still my enemy slept on. I rushed to the fireplace, and rattled the shovel and poker against one another. He cannot but stir at this, I thought; and I listened in the expectation of hearing him start. Still the same deathlike silence continued. I caught up the fire-irons, and hurled them together against the grate. They fell with a crash that might have startled the Seven Sleepers,—and I waited in a paroxysm of anxiety for the result which I had anticipated. But there were the close curtains as before, and not a sound issued from behind them to indicate the presence of any living thing. I was in a state bordering upon frenzy. The fearful suspense of the past night, the agony of emotions with which I had been shaken, working upon a body already greatly fatigued, had left me in a fever of excitement, which, if it had continued, must have ended in madness. I was wild with a mixed sensation of dread, curiosity, and suspense. One way or another this torture must be ended. I rushed towards the bed, upsetting the dressing-table in my agitation. I tore open the curtains, and there, O God! lay the cause of all my agony—a suicide—weltering in a pool *of blood. I felt my* naked foot slip in some*thing moist and slimy.* O Heaven, the horror of

that plashy gore! I fell forwards on the floor, smitten as by a thunderbolt into insensibility.

When I revived I found the room crowded with people. The noise of my fall had alarmed the occupants of the room beneath, and they had burst into the chamber where we lay. But my sufferings were not yet at an end. The noises I had made in endeavouring to rouse the stranger had been heard, and were now construed into the struggle between the murderer and his victim. How it happened I know not, but the razor with which the suicide had effected his purpose was found within my grasp. This was deemed proof conclusive of my guilt, and I stood arraigned as a murderer in the eyes of my fellow-men. For months I was the tenant of a dungeon. "It passed, it passed, a weary time;" but at length my trial came. I was acquitted, and again went forth with an untainted name. But the horrors of that night have cast a blight upon my spirit that will cling to it through life; and I evermore execrate the wretch who first projected the idea of A DOUBLE-BEDDED ROOM.

THE HANDSOME CLEAR-STARCHER.

A LEGEND OF THE DAYS OF QUEEN ELIZABETH.

WE talk of the Goddess of Fashion; but where
Has her Goddess-ship deigned to be seen,
Though her taste is consulted each day by the fair,
While men of all ages admiringly stare?—
She can be no one else than The Queen.

So, at least, it was erst, when Eliza the Great
Of our isle was the pride and the pet;
For though dress form'd small part of her right royal state,
And she valued alike her proud foes' love and hate,
She was once pleased a fashion to set.

Her sole reason for choosing was what ladies give,—
'Twas her pleasure, and that was enough.
But, when once it was seen, none without it could live;
'Twould have been all the same if 'twere coarse as a sieve,
But the "set" was a fine stiffen'd ruff.

'Twas a sort of a "*chevaux-de-frise*"-looking thing,
Such *as still in her portraits* is drawn,
Encircling her neck in an odd zigzag ring;

And the model, perhaps, was a church-cherub's wing,
Though 'twas formed of crape, muslin, or lawn.

Or of gossamer, gauze, tissue, leno, blonde, lace,—
If such elegant names were then known
For those air-woven textures that aye find a place
In the toilet of beauty, and still add a grace
When with taste they o'er beauties are thrown.

But in those days no throwing was ever allow'd,
"*Négligées*" wer'n't admitted at court,
Where, stately and formal, the fair, well-dress'd crowd
Moved rustling like peacocks or turkeys so proud,
And look'd even demure at their sport.

Some wore gowns thickly 'broidered like garlands of May;
All wore stomachers hard as a shield,
Standing upright and stiff, as in martial array,
(Of the march of clear-starching it then was the day,)
And all else but the face was conceal'd.

But the ruff! the white, well-stiffen'd, well clear-starch'd ruff
More than lace, silk, or velvet was prized.
"Its edges," they said, "like a saw should be rough;"
And slanderers declare they their handmaids would *cuff*
If it was not well starch'd, gumm'd, or sized.

'Tis a pity when ladies so pretty allow
  Themselves to fall into a pet,
And in their own boudoirs to "kick up a row"
About things they're to wear, with the what, where, or how.
  Anger ne'er made a maid pretty yet.

But, alas! in those days some few fair ones were frail,
  And their tempers would sometimes rebel:
Though perhaps the great breakfasts of beefsteaks and ale *
Might have heated the blood of the maid of our tale,
  And caused what we've now got to tell.

* The following is an extract from an order of King Henry the Eighth for a daily allowance to a maid of honour in 1522:—

"*First.* Every morning at brekefast oon chyne of beyf at our kechyn, oon chete loff and oon maunchet at our panatrye barr, and a galone of ale at our buttrye barr.

"*Item.* At dyner a pese of beyf, a stroke of roste, and a reward at our said kechyn, a caste of chete brede at our panatrye barr, and a galone of ale at our buttrye barr.

"*Item.* At afternoone a maunchet of brede at our panatrye barr, and half a galone of ale at our buttrye barr.

"*Item.* At supper a messe of potage, a pese of mutten, and a reward at our said kechyn, a cast of chete brede at our panatrye, *and a galone of ale* at our buttrye.

"*Item. At after supper* a chete loff, and a maunchet at *our panatrye barr, and half a galone* of ale at our seller barr."

Her name we don't mention, because it may chance
That she yet hath relations at court:
Suffice it, her beauty was such as romance
For all heroines claims,—she could sing, play, and dance
A merveille,—but to dress was her forte,

Or, say, rather her foible; so when ruffs came in,
And good starch rose uncommonly high,
She assured her clear-starcher she cared not a pin
For the price, but her ruffs must be stiff as block-tin;
And the clear-starcher said she would try.

So her ruffs were well starch'd, dried, and starch'd o'er again,
And both cold and hot-ironed, and press'd,
And plaited, et cetera;—but all was in vain,
For she spake naughty words, and declared it was plain
Her "artiste" was a fool like the rest.

Then she tried many others; but all fail'd alike
This most whimsical fair one to please.
Some pleaded their workfolks had "struck up a strike;"
Some swore that the ruffs' points were stiff as a *pike*:
She declared they were soft as boil'd peas.

She was sadly provoked, and yet dared not rebel
Against fashion's imperious decree;
So, when next her handmaiden desired her to tell
Where her ruffs should be sent, she cried, "Send them to h—,
And the d—l may starch them for me."

These were very bad words to escape from the lips
Of a lady so handsome and young.
But, when passion's our tyrant, morality trips,
While the tempter keeps watch for such sad naughty slips
As our maiden had made with her tongue.

And scarce had she spoken, when suddenly came
An odd sort of "Rat! tat!" at her door.
'Twas not loud enough quite for a lord or a dame,
Nor yet for her tradesfolk sufficiently tame.
She had ne'er heard such knocking before.

And of course she felt curious to know what it meant,
So her handmaid immediately ran
To the window; and, when o'er the casement she leant,
Exclaim'd with *an air of exceeding* content,
"A remarkably handsome young man!"

The young man, when shown up, bow'd and smiled
with much grace,
And soon, whispering, ventured to say,
"Gentle lady, excuse me, but such is my case
That indeed we must be quite alone face to face.
Do pray send your handmaiden away!"

Some signal, no doubt often practised before,
Caused her maid through the doorway to glide,
While the lady, embarrass'd, look'd down on the
floor,
And blush'd (perhaps) for a moment, and when that
was o'er,
Found the handsome young man at her side.

The fine figure and face of that singular beau
All comparisons seem'd to defy,
And his dress at all points was completely "the
go;"
Yet there still was a something not quite "*comme il
faut*"
In the sly wicked glance of his eye.

But his manner was humble, and silvery the tone
Of his voice, as, in euphonic strain,
He said, "Pride of the palace! well worthy the
throne!
If legitimate claim were with beauty alone,
All your rivals' pretensions were vain!"

Then (as then was the mode) he the lady compared
To the sun, moon, and stars, and their light;
Nor the heathen mythology's goddesses spared.
Any maiden of our modest days would have stared,
And some, perhaps, have run off in a fright.

But she listen'd, and aye as the flatterer spake
Smiled, and gracefully flirted her fan,
And, much wondering what end to his speech he would make,
Sigh'd, and thought, "Though I fear he 's a bit of a rake,
He is really a charming young man!"

The gallant's peroration at length took a turn
That appear'd a most singular whim;
He found fault with her ruff, and declared he could earn
Her applause (since he 'd travelled clear-starching to learn)
If she would but intrust one with him.

The request was a strange one. Yet wherefore refuse?
"Well,—pray take one!" she said with a laugh.
"Do your best. It may serve your waste time to amuse.
But it 's really so odd! Have you learnt to black shoes
In your travels? or dye an old scarf?"

"I have learnt many things," was the stranger's reply,
"And you 'll soon find I know quite enough
To fulfil your commission, for certainly I
Can hotpress, et cetera; and so, now, good-by,
Till I come back again with your ruff."

The next drawing-room day our fair maiden began
Her court toilet; but all went so-so.
"Ugh!" she cried, "I 'm quite frightful, do all that I can!
There 's nothing so fickle and faithless as man!
What 's become of my clear-starching beau?"

"Ah! my lady!" said Abigail, plastering her hair,
"That young fellow has play'd you a trick,
And stole——" But her mistress cried, "Phoo! I don't care!
If I could get but only *one* ruff fit to wear,
I would don it, though brought by Old Nick."

There 's a proverb that says, "If you speak of some folks
They are sure very soon to appear."
And, while Abigail call'd the beau's visit a hoax,
And his clear-starching one of young gentlemen's *jokes,*
His odd "Rat! tat!" proclaim'd he was near.

hen he has not deceived me!" the lady ex-
claim'd.
Why don't some of 'em answer the door?
doubt of his honour you 're much to be blamed.
I can't see him thus! I should feel quite
ashamed.
[e must wait till I 'm dress'd. What a bore!"

ake this box to your mistress, and make my
respects,"
aid the starcher as fierce as a Don,
ile he strode down the hall, "and observe she
neglects
to put on the ruff as my paper directs,
nd I 'll settle the plaits when 'tis on."

at that paper contain'd is a mystery still,
ince the chronicles only disclose
t she said his request she would strictly fulfil,
l then smiling, exclaim'd, "What a moderate
bill!
Vell, he must see all right, I suppose."

n—her toilet completed—her pride was im-
mense.
Twas "a love of a ruff!" she declared,
it compass'd her neck with its firm triple fence.
r *sole feeling was self-admiration* intense,
Vhile her handmaid admiringly stared,

And then cried, "La! I never saw nothing so nice:
What a clever young man that must be!
I suppose, though, he 'll charge an extravagant price?"
"No," her lady replied, "'twas a cunning device!
And he 's no common tradesman, you 'll see.

"The fact is, that he mention'd his charge, and you know
That I 've now no engagement on hand.
At least nothing—quite serious—or likely—and so—
After all—what 's a kiss from a handsome young beau?
Well—be silent—you now understand.

"When he comes to inspect that my ruff sets all well,
Just step out for a minute or two;
Not much longer, because there 's a proverb folks tell,
'Give some people an inch, and they 'll soon take an ell.'"
"I wish, Miss," said her maid, "I was you."

Then with looks so demure as might Cerberus bilk,
The young gentleman bow'd himself in.
His dress was embroider'd rich velvet and silk,
His point-lace and kid gloves were as white as new *milk,*
And jet black was the tuft on his chin.

"Fairest lady!" he said, "may I venture to hope
That you deign to approve of my work?
This I'll venture to say, that such clear-starch and soap
Never stiffen'd a collar for queen, king, or pope,
Nor his most sublime-porte-ship the Turk.

"And I've got" (here he smiled) "a particular way,
Which I'll show you, of finishing off.
Just allow me! Phoo—nonsense! You promised to pay——"
But the lady drew back, frown'd, and said, "Not now, pray!"
And sent Abigail out by a cough.

All that afterwards happen'd is dingy as night,
Though her maiden, as maids would of old,
Peep'd and listen'd, at first with a curious delight,
Then grew anxious,—and then was thrown into a fright.
And this was the story she told.

She declared the beau boasted his wonderful knack
Of full-dressing for banquet and ball;
And that, presently after, she heard a loud smack,
And, immediately after, a much louder crack;
Then a shriek that was louder than all.

To her mistress's aid she accordingly ran,
Wondering much what the matter could be;
Since a simple salute from a handsome young man
Never caused such an uproar since kissing began.
But no mistress nor beau could she see!

Both were gone! where and how it was fearful to guess,
As a sulphureous odour remain'd,
While thick smoke still obscured the bay-window's recess,
And with burnt hoof-like marks, and a cindery mess,
The best carpet was shockingly stain'd.

What occurr'd at the window the smoke might conceal,
Though the maid often vow'd that she saw
What was horrid enough all her blood to congeal—
A long black thing that twisted about like an eel,
And the tips of two horns, and a claw.

But more certain it is, from that day ne'er again
Did that lady at court re-appear,
Nor amid the *beau monde*. All inquiries were vain.
So, though how they eloped must a mystery remain,
What the clear-starcher was seem'd too clear.

Now, ye ladies of England! young, charming, and
fair!
Pray be warn'd by this maiden's sad fate!
And whenever strange beaux, gay and handsome,
may dare
To approach you with flattering speeches, beware
Lest their falsehood you rue when too late.

Above all, while your hearts are warm, tender, and
young,
Let no art of the tempter prevail
To extort a rash promise; since slips of the tongue
O'er fair prospects have often a gloomy veil flung,
And caused ladies' disasters in rhymes to be strung,
As hath chanced to the maid of our tale.

THE CONTRABANDISTA.

BY CAPTAIN MEDWIN.

EVENING had just begun to set in, when a long train of mules, heavily laden, obedient to the voice of their arrieros, stopped with one accord before the door of a venta, between Castile and Andalusia. The hostel was isolated, but, in spite of its miserable appearance, was a place of great resort. In front, rising to a considerable elevation, was seen one of those wells, called in India Persian wheels, for raising water, whose simple construction dates from the time of the Moors, and whose machinery is set in motion by a mule, which, blindfolded, keeps pacing in the same circle.

The caravan had just crossed the desolate plains of La Mancha, the monotonous track of which is relieved by no species of vegetation. They seemed enveloped in an atmosphere of dust and flame. Men and beasts were covered with the red and argillaceous dust, and all expressed, each in his own way, delight at having reached their destination *after the toils of the day.*

But the barking of half a dozen dogs, chained on

both sides of the door, was the only welcome which the travellers received. No one passed the threshold to do the honours of the house; and the mayoral, or head of the caravan, without appearing in the least surprised at this want of hospitality, prepared to make his way at once into the house by the narrow passage left between the Cerberuses.

"Gracias a Dio!" said he, leaping nimbly from his palfrey, and walking straight to a wicket in the great portal of the venta, which being already unbarred, he led in his horse, and all the mules followed, one by one, in the same order which they had kept during the march, and then, like a well-drilled troop of dragoons, ranged themselves in line, their necks outstretched, and waiting patiently to be relieved of their burdens. The mule-drivers, and some travellers who had for mutual security joined the convoy, closed the cavalcade; and, as soon as they had all entered, the door was as carefully shut and bolted as before,—for the night had now completely closed in.

The description of the interior of the venta will give an exact idea of the inns in Spain, or rather "refuges," as they might more properly be called, established by the contributions of the pious, or by the vanity of some high and mighty dons, and which have often been *compared to the* caravanseras of the *East.*

This interior consists of a single apartment, a vast

barn, whose raftered roof rests upon three ranges of square stone pillars. The light of day is only admitted by some openings cut out of the wall, resembling loopholes in a fortress, and these so narrow that at midday the eye must be habituated to the twilight before it can distinguish the objects within. Men, beasts, and their burdens, have all the same accommodation; and it has often happened that this spacious domicile has contained more than a hundred travellers, and double or triple the number of mules and horses. These latter are fastened on both sides of the wall. They are heard, however, rather than seen; for the windows, innocent of glass, are so placed that the light can only penetrate to the middle of the room, and the two extremities are in utter darkness. Near the door are ranged the different vehicles of the country, "galeras;" and here and there about the pillars the baggage and trunks of the different caravans are disposed. Opposite to the door, in the midst of a little paved hearth, the fire of hospitality is kept constantly alight. The smoke escapes how it can, either by the narrow loopholes, or by the chinks between the rafters and the roof, for chimney there is none.

One partition only exists in the corner of this barn. It is, as it were, a hut within a house, an asylum reserved for the landlord and his family. Against this, upon some thick planks of wood, are ranged with great regularity some enormous vessels

of red earthenware, which, to avoid the trouble of constantly fetching water from the well, contain some days' provision for the animals, whilst water of a better description, in vases of a lighter kind of clay, unbaked, is carefully stowed away for the use of the guests at the venta.

It was in this splendid apartment, and as near to the fire as they could contrive to get, that the new arrivals formed a group. A great many others had already taken up their quarters, stretched at full length in their cloaks or blankets, the only beds in the hostelry, or were seated cross-legged in the Eastern fashion round long tables on the ground, and taking their frugal meal from the provisions which they had brought with them, for none were to be obtained in the place.

"Ave Maria Santissima!" was the salutation of the company. "Good evening, caballeros; may God bless your repast!" the reply. This exchange of greetings is common even among the lowest ranks. Many invited the new comers to partake of their supper; for Arab hospitality is still kept up in that land, so long emancipated from their yoke; and no good Spaniard thinks of eating or drinking without inviting those around him, often even the passers by, to partake of his meal.

These compliments having been exchanged on both sides, a profound silence reigned in the venta; and, thanks to the darkness, we might almost fancy

ourselves in complete solitude, were it not for the monotonous noise which so many bipeds and quadrupeds made in eating.

Close to the fire, which, being now replenished, flashed full on their faces, were a group that particularly attracted my attention. It consisted of three persons, a girl and two youths, all of a beauty so remarkable, that even in that land, where it is so common, I never saw it equalled. The girl, whose name was Margarita, was about sixteen or seventeen; but, owing to that climate, where females arrive at maturity at an earlier period, she was, and had been some time, a woman, and offered at once the most striking contrast between infantine gaiety and coquetry. She was of middle height; her large black eyes sparkled with a virginal candour, though they at times expressed the energy of passion; less, as it appeared, the result of present than the prognostic of future emotions. I have spoken of her eyes, and you must excuse my speaking of them still; they shone from under their long brown lashes and thick brows, like the sun through a dark cloud.

The complexion of this young Andalusian was very different from that on which English women so much pride themselves. It was pale and clear, and brown, and set off by tresses of a jetty black.

"An Arab horse—a stately stag—a barb
New broke—a cameleopard—a gazelle—"

No—none of them will do by way of comparison—no simile will define or liken her; but I never saw the like.

I must now introduce you to the cousin. He was about twenty-seven or twenty-eight years of age, with an open countenance and a happy *insouciance*. His features were regular; his eyes resembled a brazier, which at every instant threw out sparkles of fire; he had also raven-black hair, and a complexion dark as a Moor. For an Andalusian, he was taller than they usually are, and wore the elegant cabas commonly in use in that province. The "retecilla," or net of green silk, fitted closely to the head, from which, however, some few locks escaped; his short jacket was of velvet, ornamented with ribbons, and inlaced with silver buttons; a handkerchief of red silk, negligently tied about his neck, fastened his shirt of coarse linen over his ample chest; a scarf, or girdle, also of red silk, encircled his waist in many folds, and half hid a purse and a poniard; tight breeches, of a coarse brown cloth, scarcely covered his knees; and gaiters and leathern shoes of yellow morocco completed the costume of the young Maio.

The brother of Margarita was some years older, and had a serious and determined look, as though he had led an adventurous life, and followed the profession, common in the country, of a contrabandista. Such, indeed, he was.

In the course of the evening, the young Maio asked for a guitar, and said, "Gentlemen, shall I sing you the Tragala?" The "Tragala" is in Spain what the "Ca ira" was in the First French Revolution, or the Marseillais.

Margarita pointed to one of the pillars, against which were suspended by a peg a pair of cavalry boots.

"Well," said he, with a burst of laughter, "what then?"

'What then!" she replied. "They may belong to ——; he may not be one of ours."

"No matter," said Alvas.

"Pray," said Margarita, with a voice that trembled, "do not, for the sake of a song, run the risk of a quarrel."

But Alvas tuned his instrument, and with his fine sonorous voice thundered out the Tragala, in which many of the party joined chorus. It was received with enthusiasm—and after the bravos had subsided,

"Success," said Alvas to the arms of Christino, and damnation to the Pretender!"

Scarcely had he spoken the words, when one of the guests advanced towards Alvas. He was a man of forty years of age, of a commanding stature and military air, and was enveloped in a cloak that had seen many a campaign. He was, in fact, returning from his furlough to the head-quarters of Don Carlos.

It is said that we cannot resist our destiny. At all events we are often in a mood to brave it, or to yield to the impulse of our passions, little caring for the consequences. The satirist has often lost his best friend by an irresistible *bon mot*, or epigram; the caricaturist by a sketch. A look of scorn, or a hasty word, which cannot be recalled, or which pride forbids us to retract, has led to many a scene of bloodshed. So with this officer.

Eyeing the company with a look of scorn, he said, "I will allow no one in my presence to be wanting in respect to our legitimate sovereign!"

"Legitimate sovereign indeed!" muttered Alvas; and then, "The Constitution for ever! Down with the Pretender!" he vociferated, his voice rising to *fortissimo* under the fiery impulse of his feelings.

"Who are you," demanded the Captain, "that you venture to talk thus?"

"My name," said the young man, rising, "is Alvas."

"Alvas!" replied the other—"I know that name. If I mistake not, you once attacked an escort which I commanded. You are a contrabandist and a brigand."

"Liar!" retorted Alvas; "you shall answer for this."

At these words Margarita sprang from the ground, and threw her arms about Alvas, crying, "Jesu Maria! Alvas, be calm! Think of me," Alvas,

however, shaking her off, and tearing the *retecilla* from his head, and throwing it down on the floor with violence, struck the officer a blow that nearly felled him to the ground.

He who has not experienced can scarcely conceive what a terrible effect a blow produces. That flesh, grating against your flesh, seems, as it were, to tear your heart out. You feel the blood curdle within you—the fire of shame consumes you. The stain of such a degradation can only be washed out with blood.

Several of the party now got up, and separated the infuriate pair.

"To-morrow," muttered the officer, grinding his teeth.

"To-morrow be it," repeated Alvas.

Silence was again restored, only interrupted by the snoring of the guests, that formed a concert on all sides. Whether Alvas and the officer joined in it I know not; but the recollection of the scene I have described, of the blow, and the reply, might well disturb their slumbers.

At daybreak, as the caravan was preparing, in maritime phrase, to get under weigh, I observed the officer parading backwards and forwards before the inn, in the midst of the muleteers, busily engaged in saddling the horses and loading the beasts of burden. He was at times muttering to himself curses against the Christinos. He was waiting for

Alvas, sword in hand; and the whole of the company at the inn, after the line was formed, were talking in groups, and lingering in expectation of the duel, which they knew to be inevitable. Alvas soon made his appearance, accompanied by Margarita and her brother. The timid and frightened girl was clinging to her lover. But as soon as he saw his adversary he threw her off.

"Back, girl!" he said. "Hold her." Then turning to the officer, he said to him, "We have an account to settle. Make a circle," said he to the caballeros. "Every one his own arms."

With these words he threw his mantle from off his shoulder, and rolling it round his left arm, the poniard in his right, he rushed at his antagonist. The officer could not but be aware how critical was the situation in which he stood. Wherever he turned his eyes he saw none but hostile faces and threatening looks.

Being an inhabitant of Andalusia, where he had served for some years, he was known to several of the party, among the rest to the brother of Margarita, as having shown great activity in the apprehension of smugglers and bandits; and, consequently, was more detested on that account than as a partisan of Don Carlos. It might be supposed that one who had declared himself *openly* an enemy to the Constitution, and the existing Government, would have incurred risk to his personal liberty in declaring such

political opinions; but as the civil war had only just broken out, and the priests were (there were several among the assembled travellers) secretly, if not openly, friendly to the cause he espoused, and advocates for the ancient state of things, no grounds existed for such an apprehension. He ran much more danger, even if a victor in the strife, from the dagger of the kinsman of Margarita. But no such thoughts did he entertain, or if they for a moment crossed his mind, the recollection of his stinging insult, loyalty to his sovereign, in whose cause he had received it, and the disgrace and shame of submitting to the indignity, and leaving it unavenged, nerved his arm with resolution to abide the conflict.

An old friar made an attempt to stop the effusion of blood; but on all sides a cry was heard, "Let them alone! Let them fight it out!" A circle was now formed about the two combatants, the brother of Margarita vociferating that whoever presumed to interfere should be responsible to him for the attempt. As for poor Margarita, without seeming to be terror-struck, as a young person of her age under such circumstances would naturally have been, she was seen on her knees in a corner of the building, praying fervently to the "Santa Virgen,"—not to separate the combatants, but to preserve the life of her cousin. Still it might be perceived that this scene, had it not been for the interest she felt for

one of the combatants, would have caused her no particular astonishment or terror.

The daughter of the innkeeper was at her side, endeavouring to comfort her by her caresses, and from time to time turning her head round with a female curiosity to observe how the duel proceeded. With that tact which all women have, she calmly perceived the cause of Margarita's anxiety as to the issue of the conflict, and not conceiving that she could have any other fear than that of losing her lover, kept calling out with wild and almost savage accents—

"Courage, my angel!—never fear, my dear little innocent! The officer will be killed. Alvas will not have a hair of his head injured. I have seen many affairs of this kind. With a good poniard a man has nothing to fear from a sabre. Let him say his last Ave Maria,—the poor officer!—if he knows it by heart. And yet it is a pity—such a handsome Don; but Alvas is handsome too; and then he is a Christino."

Whilst the women were thus engaged the fight became more and more animated. The officer, who was an excellent fencer as well as swordsman, at first kept upon the defensive, following with his eye, and the point of his sword, every movement of the young Maio; but he rendered all his science of no avail by his manner of fighting. Now turning with the nimbleness of a cat round and round him; now

standing motionless, or bending almost to the ground, his left arm in front; and, unrolling the ample folds of the mantle in which he was enveloped, whilst, behind this sort of curtain, his right hand invisibly brandished his long and formidable poniard.

At last, impatient of being kept so long in check, the officer assumed the offensive, and pressed his adversary, attacking him with fury.

"He is done for," said an old Torres, as he looked on, *con amore*. "It is all over with Alvas." Such, in fact, it would have appeared; but by a feint, Alvas all of a sudden let fall his cloak. The officer lifted his arm to cut him down, and at that instant fell to the earth. One groan, and all was over. The dropping of the cloak was, as I said, a feint in order to persuade his enemy to put himself off his guard; and with the rapidity of lightning he had run in upon him, and buried his poniard to the hilt in his stomach. So great the force with which the blow was struck that Alvas' thick cloak, transfixed by the dagger before it reached the side of his adversary, was pinned to the wound.

"May God have mercy on his soul!" said the murderer, making a sign of the cross, and turning with a look of pity away from his fallen antagonist.

"Come, Alvas," said the brother of Margarita; "what is done is done. It was a glorious victory. *And now, have a care* of yourself: I see some cara*bineers at the top* of the hill. Take my horse.

Time presses. Take leave of Margarita, and away."

At the name of Margarita, Alvas made a step towards her; but stopping of a sudden, "No," said he, "not with these hands of blood. No. Adieu, adieu! Margarita—dear Margarita! fare thee well!" Springing on his horse, he put his spurs into its sides, and for some minutes the profound silence kept by the witnesses of this scene of blood was only broken by the gallop of the horse, till lost in the distance.

At last the trot of the carabineers was heard, and the rattling of their sabres. The caravan was in motion. Margarita, still on her knees, thanked the "Santa Virgen," in tears, for having given the victory to Alvas, including in her prayers the name of the officer; whilst the girl of the inn related circumstantially all the details of the struggle. The corpse was placed on a hurdle, and carried by the soldiers to the nearest village for interment.

With Margarita and her brother, I soon overtook the caravan.

MARIE DE VILLEMARE.

"AND we have a new governess!" exclaimed my young cousin Emma, ending a long list of novelties that had been added to the *agrémens* of St. Edmundsbury since the date of my former visit.

"Though last, not the 'least' useful article in the catalogue," I observed.

"Ah! but she is not' cross, is she, Frank?" appealing to an urchin who had, unknown to me, possessed himself of my Brequet, and with a mischievous *penchant* for mechanics was striving to ascertain how a watch would manage its business with an embargo on its wheel.

"No," he replied slowly; "no, not exactly cross, but very proud. Nurse says she has nothing to be proud of, for she is only an upper servant, after all."

And this is the opinion inculcated into the children of the better classes; with such sentiments are they taught to regard those who are destined to *qualify them for* the station to which they belong! *But "after all,"* as my cousin Francis observed,

"after all" it is hardly to be wondered at—for governesses are such amphibious animals, it is a difficult matter to determine what element is their native one. Like Mahomet's coffin suspended midway—not, however, between heaven and earth, but between the drawing-room and the servants' hall—objects of envy to the menials—of contempt to those whose offspring must be indebted to their talents and principles for all that enhances wealth or dignifies poverty.

Dinner was announced before I had concluded my toilet. The family were at table.

The "new governess" was not present. The guests were few; chiefly men immersed all day in mercantile pursuits abroad, and all the evening in sensual enjoyments at home.

At length the cloth was removed, the wine and fruit placed on the table, and in a few minutes the sound of many voices proclaimed the vicinity of the young ones.

Soon every unoccupied chair was filled. There was Emma, who was *sobriqueted* "Fairy," for no other earthly reason but that she was as unlike her name as possible, being short, fat, and dumpy, with unmeaning blue eyes and flaxen ringlets. Then came Frank, the ingenious watch spoiler, and Susan, and Tom, and others, whose appellatives *and attributes (for,* like heathen gods and *goddesses on a small scale,* each had some peculiar

quality), I have long since forgotten. But no governess swayed them.

"Where is Mademoiselle?" demanded my aunt with a portentous frown. "Why did she not come with you?"

"She had a headache," answered one of the children. "I believe she is gone to bed."

"Mamma," observed Sarah, "you ought to speak to her. I observe she never makes her appearance at dessert when we have any one dining here."

My smooth, snake-like cousin! How I hated her from that moment, and how I pitied the poor victim that was expected to

"Come when they called,
Do as they bid,
Shut the door after her,
And ever get chid."

The evening passed heavily enough. Sarah played on the piano, and accompanied it with her voice; but I am fastidious. I never could endure music, however correct, if uninspired by feeling; and my cousin's was uninspired, soulless, apathetic like herself.

The ensuing morning I was up with the dawn, and "out-a-field," as old Herrick hath it; for though a fine gentleman in town, I can really enjoy the rising of the sun in the country. It is very different *to see his rich* golden beams dispersing the pale *amaranth clouds*, and to see him half "hiding his

diminished head" behind a mingled vapour of fog and smoke, and noxious exhalations. Yes, I really do like the sun when unadulterated!

I was strolling very leisurely through a tangled walk, which even Mrs. Vicars's prejudice for clipping and pruning had permitted to revel in native luxuriance, when I was attracted by the merry laughter of the children; so, gently putting aside the branches which obstructed my view of the meadow beyond, I observed at my leisure what was passing in front. On the ground, and resting against a gnarled oak that spread its thick branches far overhead, reclined one of the rarest creatures on whom eye ever rested. She seemed young—very young; but there was that in her face which told of "sorrows that had done the work of years." A book rested on her knee, which, however, she was not suffered to peruse; for it was haymaking time, and the children in their joyous play were flinging over her showers of the fragrant grass. They had even despoiled her of her hat, and the wavy tresses of her long, glossy hair, dishevelled by the happy rioters, streamed down her shoulders in unconfined luxuriance.

I do not think I was intended for "a man of the world." Nature originally designed me for some simple village swain, for I pitied this gentle stranger with a *pity almost "akin* to love." Nothing, *however, allied to the* passion which my friends of

the *beau monde* would dignify with the name; for mine was free from selfishness or desire of personal gratification.

With an instinctive feeling of delicacy for her situation, I forbore to make my presence known; and, suffering the boughs to resume their former position, I retraced my steps to the house.

In the evening, as Mr. Vicars had no guests, Mademoiselle de Villemare made her *entrée* with the children and the dessert. Not a word was addressed to her except by Mr. Vicars's eldest son, a young Oxonian, who endeavoured in execrable French to keep up a conversation with one who understood his native language far better than he understood hers. As for me, the common politeness of an introduction was disregarded; and I would not place her in an embarrassing position by pointedly addressing her; so Marie de Villemare sat at the table of my *parvenu* relations as if she had been really a statue.

As my stay at St. Edmundsbury was prolonged, my knowledge of Mademoiselle ceased to be confined merely to tacit observation of her features at the dinner-table. One day I summoned courage, when my aunt and Sarah were out visiting, to join my little cousins in a ramble, and thenceforward Marie and I were no longer strangers.

I found her to be a woman whose fortunes were *unworthy her genius.* A painter—a musician of no

common order—and endowed in an extraordinary degree with poetic taste and feeling;—that she could waste her rare talents in a school-room afforded me frequent matter for surprise. But there was some mystery attached to her—a mystery that had faded her cheek, and stamped her noble brow with its impress.

From admiration and compassion the transition is rapid to love. I soon felt that, for me, life were henceforth a dreary blank unless illumined by her. Yet mine was no boyish passion. I was a man in age—a man, too, in feeling,—but I loved for the first time; and if it be with the heart as with the vegetable world, that the bud which is most tardy in development produces the most lasting and exquisite flower, the inference is obvious, that my affection, the fruit of maturity, was more deep and enduring than if I had commenced running the gauntlet through the ranks of beauty years before.

But I received no testimony that the sentiment was reciprocated by Mademoiselle de Villemare; unless, indeed, I might construe her anxiety to escape from the vapid gallantry of Oxford John into a more decided preference for my quiet attentions. This vain fool, puffed up with arrogant notions of his vast consequence as eldest son of the wealthy Mr. Vicars, and as a companion of sundry unfledged lordlings *who drank his* champagne, rode his *hunters, and borrowed his* money, even went so far

as to make me the confidant of his intention to transplant his sisters' governess to some bachelor domicile of his own. How I avoided knocking him down I now wonder; but my anger was restrained by consideration for the fair object of my devotion, and I listened as calmly as I could to the history of his intentions in her favour. However, one morning he entered my room in a towering passion; and after numerous gentle expletives, he called on me to join with him in cursing the impudence of foriegners generally, and of Mademoiselle de Villemare in particular

"What has she done?" I demanded.

"See!" he exclaimed, pulling forth some papers, —"see the d——d way in which she has served me!"

He then proceeded to explain that he had on the previous evening, through the medium of the nursery-maid, conveyed her an epistle proposing the delicate arrangement at which he had hinted in former conversations with me. "And how do you suppose she answered me? Why, by returning my letter torn in pieces, and with it this impertinent note," handing me one which I opened, and read as follows:

"SIR,

"Inclosed you will receive by definitive reply *to the proposal* you have presumed to make me. It *depends wholly* on yourself whether it remain a

secret—a hint even to Mr. John Vicars will suffice to insure me from a repetition of the insult."

I sought her that evening. The result of our interview was unmitigated disappointment to me, and sorrow to both. She gently but decisively rejected the offer of my hand and fortune—told me there existed an insurmountable barrier to her union with any one; and told it in such a way as convinced me that, even were it removed, she could never be mine. I asked no explanation, for I felt it would be vain to hope for a change in her sentiments. I bade her a respectful farewell, and ere an hour had elapsed was far from the spot.

Three years had passed away, and I stood upon the deck of a Calais steamer which was about to convey me to my native shore after a protracted tour, and like all my countrymen I had managed, without intending it, to get involved in the political squabbles of every territory I visited. In Germany I had been almost compelled to confess myself *au fait* to the mysteries of the Bürschenschaff; in Italy narrowly avoided being made a peace-offering to Austrian justice, for commiserating the sufferings of Silvio Pellico; and in France just escaped with life from the events of "the three glorious days."

As I leaned over the side of the vessel I was *startled by a voice near me* repeating, as if unconsciously, *the first lines of* Marie Stuart's farewell.

"Adieu, plaisant pays de France!
O ma patrie la plus chérie,
Qui a nourrie ma jeune enfance!
Adieu, France; adieu, mes beaux jours."

I turned; the stranger raising his hat politely begged pardon for having intruded on me, and would have passed on; but there was in his air and address something that riveted my attention and induced me to enter into conversation with him.

I soon discovered that my new acquaintance possessed a mind of no common order. His views were extended—his ideas expressed with an eloquent originality that I never heard surpassed. He was evidently broken in fortunes, and depressed in spirit; but occasional flashes of commanding intellect told of mental power and energy, which, though blighted, were not destroyed.

I found that he was poor and friendless; and, worse than all, suffering under a still unhealed wound which he had received in the struggle of July.

"But I shall soon be well; and if not, *il faut être content. On ne peut mourir qu'une fois!*"

At Dover I parted from my agreeable companion, for he was too much fatigued to continue his journey; and I was anxious to meet an only sister, from whom I had been separated many years. However, we *exchanged cards*, and he faithfully promised to call *on me on his* arrival in London.

"And you have returned the same Horace Trevor as ever," exclaimed my sister, as we sat at breakfast on the following morning. "Still *garçon*—still living on the memories of the past;—*à propos de cela*, I know your Marie de Villemare."

"You know Marie de Villemare!" I repeated.

"Even so," she answered; "and if you can be patient you shall hear all about it. Last year, after those old women at the Admiralty had sent away my poor Hamilton, I found myself, as you may suppose, terribly sad and lonely here in town, and I was just meditating an elopement to Scotland among the clan, when one day Mrs. Vicars paid me a visit, and pressed and worried me so to accompany her home to St. Edmundsbury, that to get rid of her importunity I consented. There I went—there I found that sweetest of creatures, Marie de Villemare,—and there I learned to love her hardly less enthusiastically than yourself. I saw that the feeble minds among whom her lot was cast could ill appreciate the tone of her character; and I was wicked enough to try to seduce her to myself. But I failed of success; she expressed her warmest thanks for my 'kindness,' as she termed my selfish attempt, but declined my proposal. Since then the feelings of the Vicarses have undergone a revolution towards her. By some chance they discovered that she had rejected the *matrimonial overtures of* their son and heir, now a *lieutenant in the Blues*, who, finding it useless to

offer less, had tendered his hand and fortune for her acceptance. This raised her character in their opinion, and thenceforth she was treated with courtesy. But the triumph of Marie was not complete until last spring, when Mr. Vicars, from unexpected losses, was for some time on the verge of bankruptcy. With right and honest principle he avowed his difficulties to Mademoiselle de Villemare, and entreated her to seek a better situation than he could from that time afford her. But she refused; said she was so much attached to the children that she could not bear to leave them, and that she neither required nor would receive any salary for her future services.

"You may imagine," continued Isabel, "what the feelings of my uncle were, at such disinterested conduct in one whom he had formerly regarded with contempt. I am happy to say his embarrassments were merely temporary, and our dear Marie is now as highly valued as her virtues deserve."

* * * *

The night was stormy, and the rain descended in torrents as I alighted from my cab in an obscure quarter of Westminster.

My poor French friend De Clairac was ill—perhaps dying! For many months I had seen him almost daily, our casual meeting on board the *steamboat having* ripened into intimacy. True, *his manner and* temper were at times moody; but I

made allowance for a mind soured by calamity, and for a frame bowed beneath torturing disease,—for his wound had never closed, and though he would not condescend to complain, traces of his sufferings were too plainly visible in his attenuated frame and the faded lustre of his eye.

I had just turned the angle of a street, when I perceived, by the dim light of a solitary lamp, a female struggling in the grasp of a coarse fellow a few paces before me. It was but the impulse of a moment, and the drunken reprobate measured his length on the pavement, from whence he showed little disposition to rise, while the trembling woman proceeded on her way. I followed, and speedily overtook her, though she walked with a rapid step.

"Pardon me," I said, perceiving by her attire that it was no common person I addressed, "pardon me if I suggest the propriety of your suffering me to protect you until you emerge into a more frequented quarter."

At the sound of my voice she turned round. Merciful heavens! Mademoiselle de Villemare! I was about to ask her the reason of her mysterious presence in that neighbourhood, when she paused at the door of a humble dwelling. It was a corner house, and instinctively I cast up my eyes to seek the name of the street.

"*Why, surely,*" *I* exclaimed, "this is the place *to which De Clairac's* note directed me."

"De Clairac!" repeated Marie with a faint cry; "De Clairac! do you know him?"

"I am here at his own request," and I raised my hand to the knocker, but she arrested it.

"Stay, do not disturb him; I can admit you;" and thus saying she produced a pass-key, and in another moment I found myself in a narrow passage dimly lighted by a miserable candle which rested on a painted slab. My guide, taking the light, led the way into a scantily-furnished parlour, where a few decaying embers in the grate alone gave evidence of habitation.

For a few seconds we were both silent, at a loss to commence the conversation. Mademoiselle de Villemare was the first to resume composure. "Do you wish to see my—to see the Count?" she asked.

Marie seemed to read the thoughts which were passing in my mind, for her brow contracted, and a bright flush flitted for an instant across her cheek, and then died away, leaving it more pallid than I had ever seen it. She drew her slight figure proudly up, and calmly said, "Do not question me now; I will not be suspected. You will know all soon."

She left me, and I remained alone until a servant appeared, and conducted me to De Clairac's room.

He was alone, reclining on a sofa near the fire. *His languid eye* brightened on seeing me; and he

stretched out his wasted hand to welcome me. As I gazed on his emaciated features, it required not the gift of prescience to perceive that nothing short of a miracle would ever restore poor De Clairac, or renew the lamp of life already flickering towards extinction. I told him of my absence from town, which had prevented me from receiving his note until that day; and I spoke of the returning spring as a restorative for his shattered constitution.

"No, no," he said, in a broken voice; "I shall never see that season: all is nearly over here," placing his hand on his heart, "and I do not regret it except for the sake of one to whom I would make reparation. Marie, *ma bonne amie!*" he cried; and at the summons the door of an inner apartment opened, and Mademoiselle de Villemare, having exchanged her wet garments for a loose white *robe de chambre*, entered.

"Marie, these cushions are not comfortable," said the invalid; "no one can arrange them as well as you;" and in another moment she was bending over the Count with the solicitude of one whose heart was in her avocation.

"Marie, this is Mr. Trevor, the friend of whom I have spoken to you. And this, Trevor," turning to me, "is Marie de Clairac, my own inestimable wife!"

I *was hardly surprised, for* I had expected some *such disclosure; but to say* that I did not experience

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a pang at the discovery would be assuming credit for self-denial which I did not deserve.

"I have known Mr. Trevor several years," said Marie.

"And why did you not tell me so?" demanded the sick man, turning fiercely towards her.

"Simply because, though you often talked of your friend, you never *named* him."

The quiet dignity of the reply convinced De Clairac that there had been no intentional concealment; and with a sudden revulsion of feeling he hastily demanded pardon of his lovely nurse. In reply she bent her lips to her husband's forehead, but I am certain I heard her sigh as she did so.

And in what a predicament was I placed! In the presence of a friend, to whose wife I had unwittingly paid my addresses, and whom I still adored with all the madness and hopelessness of passion! But Madame de Clairac, as if in pity for the awkwardness of my position, soon retired, and then came the long-desired explanation of the mystery which had so long puzzled me.

It was but the repetition of an often-told tale. De Clairac, attracted by the youthful charms of Marie de Villemare, and proud of bearing off a prize for which many a noble heart beside contended, burst the chains that bound him to the feet of the *Marquise du D——*, and wooed and won the fair *object of his passion*. After the first effervescence of

romance had subsided, her rare genius and spotless purity might perhaps have secured the conquest her matchless beauty had gained, but that in an evil hour for both, the Count was chosen a member of the legislature; and thenceforward their happy home in the valleys of Touraine was exchanged for the bustle and dissipation of the capital. To be brief, De Clairac again yielded himself to the blandishments of his former enslaver; and poor Marie was neglected—still worse, was compelled by her infatuated husband to submit to the pollution of her rival's visits! Yet she murmured not, for she well knew that tears and upbraidings will not bring back truant love; and are, besides, the feeblest weapon an injured wife can have recourse to. Moreover, she still hoped to win him when the intoxication of passion should have given place to sober reflection.

But she was not suffered to enjoy her flattering delusion. While weeping beside the deathbed of her only child, the savage inhumanity of Madame du D—— contrived that she should find, as if accidentally, a letter written by De Clairac to that lady, in which he utterly disclaimed ever having loved Marie, and offered to sacrifice her society at the bidding of his enchantress.

"My unhappy girl!" continued the penitent husband, while tears rolled in quick succession down *his pale face,—"my* unhappy, injured wife! this *was the last bitter drop* in the chalice,—and she

drained it to the very dregs. When I arrived at the château, whither I hastened on the tidings of my Adalbert's danger, I found the household in confusion—my lovely boy was no more—and the Countess had mysteriously disappeared the night of his decease. Nor could all our inquiries obtain the least clue to her place of concealment—for I had at first refused to concur in the fears of those around me that in the desperation of her maternal anguish she had sought a grave in the waters of the Loire—and it was not until I found the fatal letter that I renounced all hope of finding her. Then I called to mind her purity of character—her gentleness—her talents—and, above all, her enthusiastic attachment to me; and I trembled to think that in the anguish of finding herself so cruelly betrayed—so heartlessly forsaken, her overwrought spirit might have tempted her to lay violent hands on her life. From the demon who had led to such dreadful results, I from that hour turned with loathing and abhorrence; and if to bear about a heart insensible to enjoyment—if to feel the never-dying worm of remorse preying on existence—if this be punishment, Marie, thou hast been amply avenged!

"But a few weeks ago a new light broke on my darkened soul. An old servant, who had often nursed Marie de Villemare in his arms when she *was an infant*, being on his deathbed, confessed *that at her* earnest entreaty he had aided my wife

to leave the château on the night of her child's death, and had conducted her to a convent at some distance, of which a relative of her mother's was abbess; that from thence she had proceeded to England, where, when last he had heard of her, she was employed as a governess. Some time elapsed, and I could decide on no plan to discover her abode: you were out of town, and I had no person with whom to advise. So at last I bethought me of inserting an advertisement in some of the leading journals—here it is," and he handed me a paper, in which I read to this effect:

"Should this paper meet the eye of Marie de C——, who left the château ———, near Tours, on the night of the 17th of June, 1826, she is entreated to evince her forgiveness by addressing Achille de C——, No. 27, N—— Street, Westminster."

"And the result was——

"Successful. In less than twenty-four hours I held Marie in my arms."

* * * * *

It was about three weeks after this interview that early one morning I received a hurried scrawl from Marie, imploring my immediate presence in N—— *Street, a sudden alteration* in the invalid having *much alarmed her.* I hastened there, and found

that during the few hours which had elapsed from my last visit an awful change had indeed taken place. It was but too evident that the sufferings of poor De Clairac were about to terminate.

I drew the physician aside. "Is there no hope?" I asked.

"None—he is even now dying—human skill can be of no farther avail."

I understood the hint; the doctor pocketed his last fee and departed.

On re-entering the apartment I found Marie engaged in prayer beside her husband. Often in my visits had I seen her thus employed, and always with increasing reverence,—for, beautiful as woman is in all the gentle charities of life, never does she appear so eminently glorious, never so elevated above the things of time and sense, as when ministering to the spiritual wants of those most dear to her—especially those about to be removed for ever from her cares! The chamber of death is the scene of her greatest triumphs. There she is no longer a mere thing of human impulse or human prejudice. Her very step is instinct with sensibility; and even when breath and hope have passed away, her heart still fondly lingers near the temple from whence the beloved and immortal tenant has for ever departed.

And the shadows of "the night that knows no *morrow*" *were* gradually settling over that beloved

countenance, on which the gaze of the heart-broken wife was riveted with all the passionate tenderness of one about to be severed from the last tie that bound her to earth. The intensity of her woe admitted not of tears or lamentations; and there she stood wiping away the clammy dew that hung in pearls upon his forehead, as unmoved and nearly as deathlike as him she attended. The stony composure of her manner did not deceive me, for there was something in the fixed stare of her dark eye that made my soul shudder within me. I would have given worlds to see her weep—rave—do anything except remain thus rigid and motionless o'er those pallid lips.

They were silent for ever—the heart so lately sentient had ceased to exist, and Marie only clung to what had been her husband!

Madame de Clairac's reason never recovered the shock of her husband's death. He had been her first love; and in her bosom, which was filled with enthusiasm to overflowing, there was no room for secondary passion. Even her affection for her child had taken its colouring from her conjugal devotion; and from the moment that re-united her to De Clairac, her all of life condensed itself into the dream of restoring him to health, and retiring with him and the wreck of their fortune to some quiet retreat *in their native land*. But the frail bark in *which she had embarked* all her hopes foundered;

and the dreamer was awakened, never to repose again in such an Eden! Her powerful mind was shattered by its very strength. Had she struggled less for the painful pre-eminence of concealing the barbed arrow within her bosom, all might have been well at last, and Madame de Clairac as happy in after years as her genius and virtues deserved. But it is in vain to fancy what might have been. God willed it otherwise, and I have learned the bitter but salutary lesson of submission.

She died—died in a fitting season for one so good, so gentle, and so fair! In the last days of autumn, —when the bright flowers and green leaves were fading,—when the summer birds were winging their way to more propitious skies, Marie de Clairac passed to her eternal rest!

They lie side by side. Their lowly grave lies a little apart from the others which fill the inclosure, and is sheltered by a noble lime tree:

"Nor storied urn, nor monumental bust"

is there. A simple headstone, with the inscription, "A—— de C——, obiit 3rd April, 1832, aged 33.—M—— de C——, obiit 25th October, 1832, aged 26," constitute the only memorial of the ill-fated pair.

"Peace to the broken-hearted dead!"

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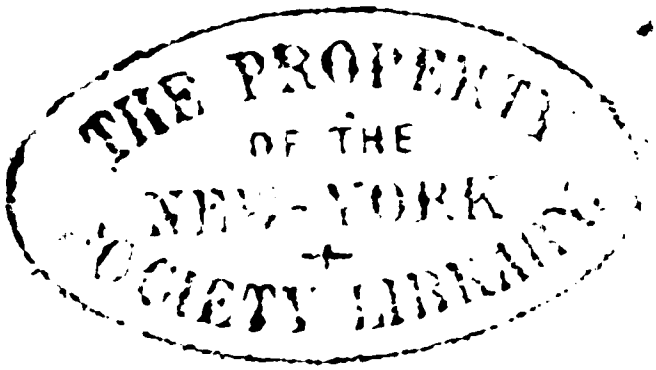

BONOMYE

THE USURER.

HOLMCOLTRAM, or Holm's Cultram, was, as everybody may not know, a respectable ecclesiastical foundation in the north of Cumberland; and the chronicle from which the following tradition is taken was lately purchased in that county, where it had lain unnoticed by any antiquary, from Leland to the pundits of the "Collectanea Topographica." It is a small folio volume, written in double columns, by "various hands," as the phrase goes, commencing with the year 1160, and ending in 1455, and contains several curious drawings and illuminations,—to say nothing of the remarkably funny stories to be found in it of Scotch barbarity and Cumbrian civilisation, of portents in air and on earth, miracles, and such-like matters. Moreover, it details at great length, and with singular minuteness, *an event merely alluded* to by other writers; *viz., how Walter Biset,* out of revenge, cruelly burnt

Patrick, the son of Thomas de Galway, with his companions, in a barn at Haddington, where he slept the night after a tournament in which he had unhorsed the same Walter. It would have delighted Scott, who was a sensible man, but would drive the poor antiquaries of the present hour out of their senses; wherefore the possessor will, out of charity to them, keep the volume to himself.

The condition of the Jews during the reign of Henry the Third was, perhaps, worse than it is said to have been under his predecessors. They had no security whatever for their lives and property as far as the king was concerned. He tormented and robbed them as he pleased. On one occasion they were summoned to give him the third of all their goods, and on another the half; and Henry, who had borrowed large sums of his brother Richard Earl of Cornwall, at last assigned him all the Jews in England in payment,—that is to say, he was to get his money out of them in any way he could; so that, as a writer of the time observes, "after the king had flayed them alive, he delivered them over to his brother to embowel."

In spite, however, of the daily persecution to which they were subjected, the Jews continued to be, with the exception of the Italian merchants, the *sole capitalists* of the kingdom. Misfortune only *sharpened their* wits and increased their energies: *they became* expert professors of the ingenious arts

of clipping and shearing, forging and cheating,—realised large sums in trade, and still larger profits by usury. All attempts to get rid of them only proved their existence to be an evil necessary to the state; and another historian who had witnessed their enormities, and in his pious zeal desired nothing better than their total ruin and extirpation, exclaims, in a momentary despair, "This accursed race is like unto the beard of the chin;—shave as close as you may to-day, there will be food for the razor to-morrow."

Usury is a mighty sin, saith the Gospel, the law, and the Chronicle of Holmcoltram. According to the latter respectable authority, it was coeval with the first use of money, and mankind required no instructor in an art suggested by, and agreeable to, the natural cupidity of the human race.

The chronicler expresses some wonder that the character of the usurer is ever the same, and quotes the eloquent essay of St. Ambrose on the story Tobias for the portrait of a money-lender in the days of the venerable metropolitan of Milan, "which in every respect," says he, "is applicable to the ungodly and iniquitous of our own age." But at the close of the thirteenth century the generalisation of ideas was unknown, and the only philosophy was that of *the schools; or* the worthy monk, instead *of being surprised at this* fact, would have remarked, *with the pertness of* a modern moralist, that the

same passions produce the same effects in all ages and under all circumstances.

The object of the chronicler in relating the story we translate is, to impress upon his readers that a terrible punishment invariably awaits the most successful wickedness; that although the cup of enjoyment may have already touched the lip, the hand of retribution is ready to dash it down; to reclaim the iniquitous from the ways of evil, and to warn the thoughtless and profuse of the danger of entangling themselves in the toils of avarice and the Jews. The horror he expresses of the whole race of usurers was natural enough to one who lived in an age when their profits were enormous, and who viewed their practices as contrary to the precepts of the Gospel; but, without running into political economy, it may be observed, that the high interest which money then bore was only equal to the immense profits reaped by the few mercantile adventurers of the time, and that the people in general, and much less the clergy, had not yet perceived that money is a mere article of merchandise, the value of which is always proportioned to the supply of it. Trite as this remark now is, it had not then entered the heads of our warlike legislators, who, suiting their acts to their own *con*venience, were unaware that, while at one time *they refused to* acknowledge the legality of usury, *and at another* endeavoured to limit the rate of it,

they repressed the spirit of commercial speculation, the grand source of national wealth.

"The tale was related unto us," says the chronicler, "in our refectory, by Sir Thomas de Multon of Egremont, who heard it while in London from persons of approved credit. The same Sir Thomas tarried with us on the eve of the Ascension in the first year of King Edward, and presented a cup for the Eucharist, made of a griffin's egg set in silver gilt, and curiously wrought with strange devices: he also confirmed unto us the four dozen dishes of ore out of the iron mine at Coupland, formerly given unto us by Lambert de Multon; and the holy father abbot gave unto him a little casket containing a toe-nail of St. Osith, which the said pious knight received with much veneration, and joyfully carried away with him."

No one can doubt that the abbot had the best of the bargain, for he had long ceased to trust in relics for protection against the Scots thieves who harried his lands and burned his barns; but the iron would pay the armed men he was obliged to support, and who would have given no thanks for a cart-load of arm-bones, double teeth, and toe-nails, though they had once pertained to the greatest saints in the calendar.

Bonomye the Jew sat, towards the close of an *autumn day in the year* 1247, in the little back-*room of his tenement* in Milk-street, Cheapside.

The house was a miserable wooden erection, patched up against a stone building appropriated to the officers of the royal wardrobe; and the room to which we refer was of the most uncomfortable description, although it served him for counting-house, treasury, and many purposes besides. It was a large closet, the walls of which were rudely plastered and black with dirt, the floor partially covered by the remains of a rush mat, and the furniture consisting of a rudely-shaped oaken table, a chest strongly bound with iron, a couple of short benches, and a single chair, which, on the present occasion, was occupied by the owner of the place. He was a man somewhat advanced in years, short in stature, and possessing in an extraordinary degree the strongly-marked features of his race. His beard was short and grey, and his matted hair straggled over a well-formed forehead seamed with many a careful wrinkle, from beneath which his sharp, restless black eyes peered out with an expression of distrust and apprehension, while a peculiar habit of looking down the line of his nose, when in conversation, gave a sinister expression to his countenance. He was thin, of a sallow complexion, and wore a long dark brown robe gathered round the middle by a leathern girdle, a black woollen cap falling behind, and loose boots of *cordovan leather*. He was evidently uneasy, *fidgeted about* in his seat, and although a parch

ment covered with calculations lay on the table before him, seemed at a loss what to do.

Bonomye was reputed to be the richest of the many wealthy usurers then resident in London: the king had him under his special protection, and, in the multitude of his transactions, he had obliged or swindled not a few of the nobility and clergy: the chest of the notary of the Jews contained more bonds due to him than to any other of his money-getting race.

Hitherto he had been a fortunate man,—had escaped the fury of several mobs of unruly citizens who plundered the dwellings and murdered some hundreds of his luckless brethren, and, with the exception of two or three debts which the king had pardoned without consulting him, his speculations had proved eminently successful. Well was his dwelling known; thither went men of all degrees, from the noble to the squire, the bishop to the clerk; the prodigal heir and the scheming merchant, all who could give the desired security, had found Bonomye an obliging lender, and quitted his threshold with light hearts. When the day of restitution was come, and they had not wherewith to satisfy him, though they still found him smiling and servile, the smile was sarcastic, the servility a habit; for Bonomye was a merciless creditor. The ruined *heir saw his fair lands* glide away beneath his grasp, *the bankrupt trader* cursed him when he saw the

sheriff in possession of his goods and warehouse; and to all the blow was unexpected, for the Jew was so civil, listened to their tales with such attention, and seemed so accessible to pity, that they hoped, and were deceived. Bonomye hated a Christian, and never renewed a loan. He did both upon principle: his faith and the sufferings of his people led him to the first; and he generally reasoned justly when he said to himself, "If this bond and the interest cannot be paid, how shall I be satisfied when both are doubled?" His money he would have: the tears of the orphan, the entreaties of the all but ruined merchant, beauty in its most dazzling guise, manhood in its hour of pride and strength, age in its helplessness, and misery and despair, had never changed his resolution. "Not one drachm less; I am but a poor man,—you have used my money, and it must be returned." He had never abated one farthing of his due: prayers and execrations were unheeded by him; he weighed and reweighed, told the pieces one by one into the chest —each chink was as a drop of balm to his soul, and in the possession of his money he was a happy man. Fresh victims were always to be found, and Bonomye always ready to accommodate them; and so he went on accumulating and lending, strong in hate, hard in heart, and utterly without conscience, saith the *Chronicle of Holmcoltram*; "homo iniquissimus, *filius Diaboli, et damnatus.*"

The day of adversity, however, was at hand. Bonomye always lent out to the last stiver, and to keep up his stock of cash for the supply of the many demands upon his purse, he had been obliged, a few months before, to borrow a large sum of a company of Italian merchants then in London. It was put out to advantage, it is true, but the day appointed for the repayment of it was but a week distant, and his chest nearly empty: his creditors were, if possible, greater sharks than Jews, and in a riot that had recently taken place the Londoners seized all their treasure, which they had deposited for security in the religious houses of the town; so that, although at any other time they might have been disposed to renew the loan, they were now urgent for the discharge of it. But this was not the sum of the Jew's difficulties. He might have sought assistance from his brethren, had they not suffered severely from the same riot that had almost ruined the Italians. The Jewry was burnt, their synagogue destroyed, some hundreds of Jews were murdered, and their treasure rifled by the crowd; and, above all, at this calamitous period, it suited the convenience of the king to call upon them for a heavy loan, and Bonomye himself had been favoured that very morning with a writ, in which the king addressed him as "trusty and well-beloved," reminded *him of the long and* effectual protection he had *enjoyed, and commanded* him, at the peril of hindering

his Majesty's business, to contribute twice the amount required of any other Jew. "Two thousand marks," groaned Bonomye, as the fatal missive dropped from his grasp; "so much did I give to obtain his countenance. My brother Reuben spoke the word of truth when he said that my shekels were as chaff scattered before the wind, for that the Gentile heedeth not his word. Protection, forsooth! the boon of being the last to be devoured."—Bonomye knew too well the consequences of a refusal; that however true his plea of poverty might be, it would be tested by the dentist, the gridiron, or the hangman; and that a Jew could obtain no pity but by purchase. Often had he known his brethren suffer, and had heard unmoved the harrowing recital of their torments; the blow had not fallen upon himself, and he was insensible to the misery of another: but now all the horrid scenes that recollection could bring to mind or imagination conceive crowded on his thoughts; he ground his teeth—they were all firm and sharp, age had neither loosened nor impaired them; he had picked a mutton-bone that day for the fourth time, and found a dinner upon it. Despair prompts the wretch whose ruin is, or appears to be, inevitable, to dwell upon the various stages of his fall, and to imagine every scene; and Bonomye shuddered with ideal pain as he fancied the pincers *of the barber tearing* his teeth from their sockets; *he saw the Elms*, that dreary field, and those massive

gibbets, green with damp and moss, that had witnessed the last convulsions of so many of his people; he heard the rattling of the dried and bleached bones that yet hung in those chains, and beheld those blotches of long rank grass beneath which still mouldered away the bodies of so many victims of persecution: never had he seen the spot but once, yet every feature of it was distinctly in his eye. He fancied the brutal and merciless mob, their shouts and their ribaldry, the immovable and business-like satellites of death, and his hand insensibly clutched his long scraggy neck; again did imagination exercise its fearful power—his sallow face grew flushed, his eyes hard and burning, and in that long nervous grasp he had anticipated half the horrors of suffocation. Without one good act to dwell upon, and his natural timidity increased by an evil conscience, want, and perhaps death, before him, Bonomye for the first time felt the intense agony of that despair that expects no pity, the sickness of the heart that knoweth no comfort, and that wound which never heals. He had no tie to bind him to life, no wife, no child, to leave to an uncertain fate, but he dreaded death: now he thought that, could he but save his life, he would be content to give up all that he had, and when he considered what he must sacrifice—his gold, the idol of his waking and *sleeping thoughts—he* would rather resign both *together. Agitated by* conflicting resolutions, he

now determined to brave in all its horrors the fate that awaited him; then imagined that if he could escape with some remnant of his wealth, he would be an altered man,—that the prayer of the distressed should not be addressed to him in vain, that he would be as merciful as he had hitherto been callous. Seldom had Bonomye prayed, but now his lip quivered with the inward entreaty for Divine assistance; he felt that the hand of the Almighty was justly raised against him, that the vial of wrath was about to be poured on his devoted head, and he vowed, after the fashion of the Gentile, to rebuild, if he escaped his present danger, the synagogue so lately destroyed, and to replace the roll that contained the sacred dispensation of his race. "Alas!" saith the Chronicle, "these were but passing thoughts; the author of all evil had strong hold of his soul, and impelled him towards the bottomless pit." After a few moments, the feelings of the miser returned in all their ancient strength,—prayers, vows, and resolutions were forgotten, and Bonomye, opening his chest, took forth a small box filled to the brim with little rolls of parchment, the acknowledgments of his numerous debtors. Although he knew well enough the dates, he still fancied that some might be nearly available,—he would look and see what hope remained unto him.

"*The Abbot of* Westminster, five hundred marks. *Ay, they were for the* Norway hawks and Spanish

jennets he bought of Peter of Sienna: those Lombards draw all to their clutches—nothing comes amiss—one year yet to run—the wool of the manor of Hide for so long as interest: I did not wisely; the herd tells of the rot. Reuben said yesterday the Abbot had sold the wool of Cotswold to them of Lucca for ten years to come for the same sum: a proud prodigal priest that; the monks will soon get but poor commons, methinks—the goodly rents of their lands fly away on the wings of the Abbot's hawks.

"Philip de Lovel, a thousand. Master Philip knoweth the ways of the great, and hath found favour at court—the king's justice may not be reminded of the bond of the bishop's serving-man. Over the term by three months: 'tis lost.

"Nicholas de Basing, three thousand. A man well to do, but somewhat stiff withal, is Master Basing: he striveth hard with the Italian; men say the king loveth him, and showeth it by running long bills. Six weeks of the term: he might help me—I 'll try: his daughter, who loveth young Adam Bukerel, is well favoured, and the maiden may like a necklace of the real Paris work."

He went on muttering as he read, and many were the anecdotes of folks of all classes which might have been gathered *from* his soliloquy. He seemed *to wish to prolong the* result of his search, and, as *his recollection served* him, touched with more or

less minuteness on the circumstances and characters of his debtors.

The contents of the box were exhausted, the last roll dropped on the table, and Bonomye sank back in his chair, crossed his hands before him, and, with his eyes fixed vacantly on the wall, looked the very image of misery and dismay. The only ray of hope he had derived from his search rested on the chance of Nicholas de Basing being willing to take up his bond at some reduction of the interest; but then the sum was so small that it would be of little use. The amount he owed the Italians was four times as much; and although a part of it might appease them until he should have time to look about him, what could he do with the king's demand upon his purse? A thought struck him—he would place in his hands bonds to the amount required of him; and although the terms for their payment had not arrived, he believed that the royal prerogative would be sufficient to compel the liquidation of them, if the money was to be had at all.

In the midst of these reflections, a knock at the outer door recalled Bonomye's attention; and having hastily scrambled up the loose deeds and returned them to their place, he went to inquire who visited him thus late in the day.

"*My errand* is from Albert Boccanigro, the *Italian, to Master* Bonomye, the Jew. Open the *door, man, for* the wind blows coldly down this

reet. You must have slumbered, methinks, for 've stood here till I can scarce feel my fingers."

Bonomye, to whom the name was well known, alf opened the door, muttering in apology the hile something about fatigue, drowsiness, and the eafness of his old servant; and peered out upon the ranger, who, hastily pushing open the door, entered ithout ceremony.

"No times these for men to sleep in the broad ay, Jew: folks who would look to themselves and neir goods must be up and waking."

So saying, he walked into the room, followed by Bonomye, who, pulling one of the benches towards he table, entreated him to be seated. The stranger, who from his speech appeared to be an Englishman, ad a foreign look and complexion: his dress was hat of the merchant of those days, but he wore over t a long dark cloak. At his girdle was the usual ppendage of a writing-case, and Bonomye remarked hat he carried beside it a long knife or dagger. The Jew did not like his countenance or manner, ut dissembling his uneasiness as well as he could, lemanded what the Italian would have with him, about which he had some misgivings, for Boccanigro was he principal of the society to which he stood indebted.

"It is late in the day," he remarked, "and Master Albert *generally looks* after business himself; *e is not wont to employ* strangers. By what mark *all I know that you* come from him?"

"By this mark," replied the stranger. "Albert bids me say to you, that concerning the silver you owe unto him and others of his——"

"But the day is not yet come," said Bonomye; "it is still a week distant. Doubtless, though times are bad for our people——"

"Hear me, Jew, and then thou may'st speak as thou pleasest. Master Boccanigro doubts not you will repay them; but touching the renewal of the loan, which he refused when you spoke of it but lately, he bade me say that some of his company have arrived by sea with treasure from France, and maybe the matter can be settled now. They bring also much silver plate, and he would consult you how to barter it elsewhere than at the king's exchange: to make few words, he would speak with you this present night at his house in Southwark."

"Master Albert knows," said the Jew, "that I am always ready to serve him with my poor aid; but the night is coming on, and 'tis not safe for our race to be abroad."

"Ay, ay, we know well enough you will serve if there is aught to be gained; and as for being abroad at night, man, the streets are quiet enough. These Londoners have tired of their recent sport, and if need be I can protect you; so let us be going. If men say truly, thou art not wont to be dull in *pursuit of lucre.*"

The stranger now rose, and Bonomye, in whom

fear and expectation were mingled together, summoned up resolution enough to say that he would accompany him. Taking the precaution to transfer every loose article to his chest, and having carefully locked it, and thrust the key into his inner vest, he seized his cap, and led the way to the door. At the foot of the staircase, he stopped, and bawled out, "Rachel! Rachel!" several times without receiving an answer. At length the old deaf crone who played the part of his servant-of-all-work condescended to reply.

"Look to the door, Rachel, look to the door, I say: no one must enter while I 'm away. And, Rachel, put up the great bar that Geoffrey the smith fitted t'other day. Dost hear, Rachel?"

The old woman having signified that she understood him, he undid the door, and quitted the house with the stranger, who had become impatient at his delay.

It was evening when Bonomye and his companion found themselves in Cheapside, and a dense October fog was rapidly spreading its volumes of mist over the long line of irregular buildings which then formed that now populous thoroughfare. Although the hour was not later than eight, few persons were abroad; for after dark the Cheap was a dangerous spot. At the time of which we write, this street had *not the regularity* and spaciousness which a *century afterwards fitted* it for the splendid justs

and revels of the court of the third Edward, when Queen Philippa and her ladies witnessed the sports from the steeple of Bow or the gallery in Soper-lane. The reader will imagine a long narrow street extending from St. Paul's to the Poultry, on either side of which wooden sheds jutted out with great irregularity and little regard to the sanctity of the highway, which was in parts considerably narrowed by their encroachments: in some instances there were rooms over these sheds; but generally the houses, with their quaint gables, rose a little in the rear of them, varying in size, height, and appearance, according to the circumstances of the owners. A stack of bare wooden boards, black with age, and mouldering with the rot, was squatted by the side of the rudely-carved and newly-painted front of a wealthier tradesman or private person, in which small glass windows took the place of the miserable lattices which distinguished the poorer tenements; and here and there a stone building of some pretension and antiquity might be seen; but in every instance the buildings were constructed without that respect to mutual convenience which in modern times has been secured by law. A few years later, considerable improvements were made; the thoroughfare was widened, the sheds gave way to edifices which, though yet of *wood,* assumed a more regular appearance, and the *noble conduit of* Henry de Waleys, better known by *the name of its* renovator, Ilam, conveyed a stream

ure water to the district. Yet, miserable as the aspect of the Cheap by day, still when ed at night, with a clear sky, and the moonlight ming upon it, the sharp outlines of the roofs ng against the horizon, every angle and pecu- y brought into strong relief, and the broad ses of gloom below, produced by the various ections of the houses, gables, and sheds, it ded one of those bold combinations of lights shadows, and that picturesque effect which we in vain amid the uniform brick piles that have eeded the humble habitations of our ancestors. have said that it was a dangerous spot, and it so, because even in the clearest night the road dark, and many were the nooks in which the pad or cut-throat from the notorious vicinity of Martin's-le-Grand laid in ambush for the ggling passenger. To such excesses had they eeded about this time, that the holy brotherhood hat place, after having lost half its members ugh fright and broken heads, implored in vain aid of their patron saint and the city watch, and ed with bell and book till they were tired, were building a wooden gallery over the street from r cells to the belfry of St. Martin's, through ch they hoped to pass to vespers and matins out loss *of life.* *From* such neighbours the *p could not escape.* The watch was generally *and always idle,* and in the depth of winter

the streets were without lights, save the candles that twinkled through window and lattice, and the red smoky lamp which marked the locality of some tavern: but on the evening in question the darkness was intense; the damp fog hung overhead, nestled in the nooks and corners of the street, and deepened the shadows; viewed through its delusive medium, the distant lamp looked like a flickering in the far horizon, and the tall steeple of St. Mary-le-Bow, and the grotesque outlines of the houses, indistinctly seen as the vapour was wafted by the current, seemed gigantic because undefined.

Long as the Jew had lived in London, he had never been in the streets after dark; it was dangerous enough for his race to tread them in the light of day, when they did well to escape with the gibes of the populace,—and at the present time, above any other, he would have avoided it had he been able. The bigoted mob was yet in a state of excitement. But a few days before, seven hundred Jews had been massacred, and the ruins of their habitations were yet smoking. A sad experience increased his natural timidy, and worked upon his imagination; and but for the prospect of worldly salvation thus unexpectedly held out to him, he would have receded when he looked upon the gloomy street *spread* out before him. His companion, who seemed *indifferent to* the scene, trod swiftly on towards *Cornhill, and* Bonomye with his trembling gait had

ıe difficulty to keep up with him, stumbling ry moment over the uneven road, starting in ·or at the most distant sounds, and fancying the sence of a murderer in every dark corner of the ɔet. They had proceeded half up the Cheap, en the Jew noticed with some anxiety that the ·izon was red with the reflection of a strong ht, and remarked the appearance to his com- ıion, who answered with indifference that it ːmed to be a fire, and was probably at a distance, the mist was deceptive. Bonomye, who from ɔent occurrences could only associate the idea a fire with the house of a Jew, grew terribly ırmed, and his dread was increased when, after ɔy had gone a few paces further, the shouts of a ɔb became distinctly audible. The sounds ap- ared to be coming in their direction. He en- avoured to increase his speed; but a strange rversity seized his companion, whose pace, late so pid, now became intolerably slow, and he expressed wish to see the event of the business. In vain l the excited Jew point out the risk they would cur, and conjure him to escape: he coldly re- arked that they could run no danger by min- ing in the crowd, and advised him to muffle his ce as much as possible, and to abide by his direc- ɔns.

When they reached the end of the Poultry, the *ht became clearly* distinguishable: it was the

blaze of hundreds of torches in the hands of a furious mob, which poured out in such a rapid torrent from the various alleys then occupying the site of the present Mansion-house, that the Jew and his companion were insensibly carried along by it. All was confusion and uproar; a thousand voices, uttering a thousand different cries, were raised together. Yet scarcely a word could be understood; and from time to time a furious yell uttered by a single individual was quickly caught up and echoed from the whole assembly; and then the clamour would subside into a loud murmur, which floated, as it were, above the dull heavy tread and rush of the multitude.

In the centre of the mob some one was dragged violently along, and at intervals his loud cries and entreaties were distinctly audible.

"What is it?" asked some frightened citizens who hung on the outskirts of the throng. Alarm and curiosity were expressed in their countenances, and several spoke at one and the same moment.

"A Jew dog who has stabbed Adam Linton in Walbrook: they will hang him, I trow, and do rightly too, I say for one," answered a burly red-headed fellow, whose discoloured leathern apron, sooty face, and huge hammer betokened him to be a smith, and in whom Bonomye recognised, with *some apprehension*, the man Geoffrey, who had *lately fitted the* iron bar to his street-door.

"Hang him! ay, that will they," said a dirty ggar, whose crutch, that lately supported a bad , now held aloft a dripping torch, "and burn few more of their nests, I hope: I got little ough to my share when we set the Jewry in a ze t'other night. Curse them all! they prey on us poor folks."

"Prey, indeed!" observed a meagre-looking low to those nearest him: "I would have rrowed twenty shillings of the Jew Mosse the ner day, but he asked two shillings a week for e use of it, the greedy infidel! and, by St. ispin, I needed the money much to get me ther."

"Thou must have cobbled a good few buskins to y that, Master Adam, and have worked better an when you fitted me that new heel-piece; I w it's loose already," growled a discontented cus- mer. The cobbler, whose anger was excited by is question of his skill, was about to reply, when, the sudden rush of the crowd as it entered the rrow opening into Cornhill, Crispin and his cuser were separated.

The mob, recruited by fresh comers in every rection, moved rapidly on; and Bonomye, whose ars were dreadfully excited, clung with a con- lsive grasp to the arm of the stranger, whose *ject it seemed to get* as near as possible to the *erable object of the* uproar. They had now

reached Grasschurch-street, into which the mob turned, and, impeded by a rush of people in the opposite direction, halted. The whole space from Bishopsgate-street to Fish-street-hill was filled with a dense mass of people of every description. There were the butchers and fishmongers from the neighbouring market, the drapers' apprentices from Cornhill, the ruffians of St. Martin's, thieves and beggars, decent citizens and houseless vagrants, all brought together by the hope of plunder, or that strange curiosity which, even in days of greater refinement, assembles such crowds to view the last moments of the felon. The dense fog, from which a drizzling mist was falling, hung a gloomy canopy above, red with the blaze of the torches, and rendered denser by their smoke; the same lurid light was cast on the faces and heads of the crowd, and on the houses on either side, at the lattices of which the alarmed inmates were seen in every variety of dress, viewing with apprehension the threatening aspect and gestures of the mob, the uproar of which baffles description;—yells and execrations, the slang of the rabble, the shouts of people recognising one another at a distance, the loud boisterous laugh, the shrill whistle, the low professional jokes of the different trades, the noise *of fifty conflicts* for place and room, in which heads *were broken* without number, and all these various *sounds at times* ceasing in the long-continued roar

which demanded the punishment of the unfortunate culprit. It was curious to see the countenances of the crowd beneath the strange glare that lighted up the scene;—the careless laughing face of youth beside the grave burgher, on whose features sat grave concern; the deformed beggar, the malignant-eyed ruffian, eager for blood and plunder, who viewed all with the vacant stare and open mouth of vulgar curiosity, uncertain of the event, and excited by no object.

Bonomye, dragged along by the stranger, who vigorously elbowed his way through the crowd, now found himself near enough to see the prisoner. He was surrounded by a circle of men, who seemed to be the leaders of the mob, and was kneeling with his back towards the spot in which Bonomye stood. His black gown was torn to tatters, and covered with dirt; his head, over which were scattered a few long grey hairs, was uncovered, and his hands raised in supplication; while the words of entreaty he would have uttered were broken by his heavy and frequent groans.

"Save me! save me!" he exclaimed at length to a young man of a superior air to those about him, and who seemed to be an unwilling spectator of the scene.

The youth *turned* away, and, as he passed by *Bonomye, muttered,* "Save thee, man! 'twould be *a miracle to do it.*"

The victim, in whom the appearance of the person he had thus addressed seemed to have excited some wild hope, turned his head in the direction in which he retired. The light of a torch fell full upon his face, and showed the astonished Bonomye the countenance of his gossip Reuben. The exclamation he would have uttered was checked by his companion, who pressed his arm. But the name had escaped his lips, and the ears of the wretched prisoner were quick. Looking eagerly around, he said,

"Yes, I am Reuben. Who calls me?—who is it that speaks to the wretched Reuben?"

His eye glanced sharply about, but the stranger now stood between him and Bonomye; and it was lucky for the latter that the attention of those about him was at this moment excited by an uproar at the top of the street, occasioned by the city watch, who had been called out, and now endeavoured to force a passage in. They were received with loud shouts and laughter, together with exhortations to go home and comfort their wives; and when the alderman who commanded saw the determined faces of the mob, and the flourish of staves, and learned that it was a Jew only whose life was in jeopardy, he retreated to tell the mayor that the riot was of little moment.

The emotion Bonomye had shown did not arise *so much from surprise* at seeing Reuben, whom *he knew to be a* peaceable man, in such a

ation, and charged with so great an offence, 'rom other motives. Relieved, as he imagined, ı the ruin that so lately threatened him, his rt was again hardened; and, after the first nent of amaze, the thought flashed upon him ; he had Reuben's bond in his chest,—two dred marks were lost, irrecoverably gone. "He ɜt die," thought the Jew, "and these Philistines spoil his house;—I cannot repay me out of his ttels:" and from that moment this was upper- ɜt in his mind. He grieved not for his ancient uaintance as another would have done; and if he ıed him to be saved, the feeling was prompted 'e by the desire to obtain his silver than a nterested wish to see him snatched from the ıdful fate before him. Pure sympathy was un- by Bonomye; and the only sensation at all akin t which he experienced, arose from his knowing ; he himself was quite as obnoxious to the ounding crowd, and that, if discovered, he might ɜ his place beside Reuben. Mentally cursing imprudence in thus venturing abroad so late, he ed his cap lower over his face, crept closer to stranger, and awaited the event with some dread; all his apprehensions were for his own safety.

'he prisoner had essayed in turn, and in vain, pity of those who surrounded him, and appeared, *'e have said, to be the* ringleaders. His yellow *hands, clasped* with the intensity of despair,

were raised to each without success; his lustrous black eyes, from which the silent tear trickled down his shrivelled cheek, fell upon scowling faces,—appealed to hearts inflamed by rage and the thirst of vengeance. A cuff from one, a kick from another, and a loud curse from a third, were the only replies to his impassioned entreaties for mercy and asseverations of innocence.

"Here, Jew, eat!" cried a burly apprentice, squeezing into the circle, and thrusting into his mouth the remains of a mutton-pie; "eat, man. Thou hast a long road to journey, and but a short path into it. Eat, dog!"

A loud laugh burst from the bystanders, with "Eat, Jew, eat!—'tis no pork." The miserable man sank down, covered his face with his hands, and was silent. The mob, which had now waited patiently for some minutes, renewed its clamour with increased fury. Loud rose the cries of "Hang him, hang him!" But at this moment the bell of Bow Church tolling nine was faintly heard, as the sound struggled with dense atmosphere and contrary wind; and some merry fellow in the crowd roared out the popular couplet, that had passed current in London from the days of the curfew,

"Clerk of the Bow Bell
With the yellow lockes,
For thy late ringing
Thy head shall have knockes!"

and for a time it was repeated by the mob in a chorus so deafening, that had the clerk of the bell been there, he would have been stunned by the noise, though his head might have escaped the threatened knocks. But this was a passing humour only. Intent upon their purpose, they soon returned to their former cries and uproar: the pressure upon the spot where the prisoner lay grew long and fierce; the foremost and most outrageous of the throng demanded him to be given up to them; but the smith and the beggar, whom we noticed at the beginning of the tumult, and who had all along acted a conspicuous part, with some of their fellows, stood stoutly against the rush.

"Fair play!" roared the smith, whirling his hammer.

"Fair play! We can't all have a pull at him, but we may all see him hang," exclaimed the beggar, flourishing his crutch; and preparations were made for the last scene.

Immediately opposite to the fatal circle in which the prisoner lay was a hostel, distinguished then, as after, by the sign of the Hart on the Hoop. It had a courtyard in front, and the entrance to it was through an arched gate, over which was an iron hoop surmounted by a rudely-carved stag's head. This was pointed out by one of the leaders as a good *spot to proceed to* execution; the Jew was dragged *towards the gate, and the* cry was now for a rope.

"Master Cornewaile will have a good sign," quoth one: "where a Jew hangs, Christians will find good cheer."

But mine host thought otherwise. He had witnessed the whole scene from a lattice, and when he perceived the intentions of the mob, descended, in company with a friar who happened to be taking his cup there that evening, or comforting the hostess, or probably doing both, and began to parley with those nearest his gate.

"What, sirs! you will not shed blood on my threshold, and mar the good repute of my house?"

"No blood," growled a fellow who was trying to fling the end of a rope through the hoop,—"no blood, Master Gilbert,—hanging spills no blood; though this dog of a Jew hath spilled honest Linton's;—didst know him?—the draper in Walbrook?"

"By the God above, I did *not* slay him!" exclaimed Reuben, making one last effort: "the man was dead when I found him, and I did but——"

"Ay, ay," answered the man who had failed in his attempt to pass the rope, "who ever heard of a Jew stopping to raise or touch a dead Christian? Plague seize the fellow who brought this shred!—A rope, I say—another rope. Don't stand prating there, Master Gilbert;—look, man, if thou hast a *good rope in thy* house."

"*Thou 'lt have* no rope from me, Robin Trouble-

town. An thou wouldst hang the man, get a rope where thou canst. I'll have naught to do with the death of any one."

With this, Gilbert Cornewaile was about to close his gate, when a loud piercing shriek rang wildly from the opposite side of the street, and he stood, the half-closed door in hand. The voice of a female was heard entreating the mob to let her through; and so sudden was this interruption of the horrid work, that, taken by surprise, a road was made for her across. Rushing wildly towards the victim, she threw herself on her knees beside him, parted the long grey hairs that had straggled over his face, and kissed him with nervous affection.

"Reuben, my father!" she exclaimed, "'tis thy daughter Miriam. Look up, my father, and behold thy child!"

The unfortunate old man, by this time almost insensible to everything, gazed vacantly upon her beaming face, that seemed to look into his very soul. A faint expression lighted up his features for a moment—he had recognised his daughter; but this last sign of intelligence died away,—he uttered a low, faint laugh,—the laugh of incipient idiotcy,—and his head dropped heavily on the bosom of his child.

Supporting her father with one arm, Miriam *turned towards his persecutors.* She was eminently *beautiful; her long dark* hair, dishevelled by her

struggle in the crowd, fell over her shoulders, and her full black eyes were suffused with tears as she begged with hysterical earnestness for mercy to her parent.

"Look you, sirs," she said, "he is my father,—Reuben, the son of Jacob the Rabbi,—and I am his daughter Miriam. You will not kill him!—he is my only parent. No!—I am sure you will not. See, he is an old man!—look at his grey hair! He is merciful, too,—he could not slay a fellow-creature. Do you think this weak, trembling hand," raising her father's arm, "could wield a knife? Oh, no! no! no!—it could not be he: he was ever kind and good! Say now that you will not murder him!—Good people, let me take my father away, and I will pray for you! God hears the prayers of the meanest of his people. Yes, Miriam will pray for and thank you all!" Encouraged by the momentary irresolution that had seized the executioners, she turned again to her father. "Look up, my father,—they will not slay thee!—they pity the sorrow of thy daughter—they will be merciful unto thee and me!"

He gave the same low chuckling laugh, and this time it seemed to mock the hopes and exertions of his child.

A barbarian could not have witnessed this scene *unmoved.* The chief actors in the business, if not *moved, were,* to say the least, puzzled by this new

impediment to their purpose, and eyed one another in silent indecision. As for Cornewaile, who still kept his place at the gate, he cried like a child: but the distant mob, (who, though they knew the cause of the delay, did not see it, and could not feel the force of the child's appeal for the life of her parent,) and the friends of the murdered man, were not to be appeased but by the sacrifice of his supposed assassin.

"Take away the she devil," said one; "Hang her up with the old one," said the deformed beggar; and Robin Troubletown, who had by this time procured a fresh rope and passed it through the hoop, approached with the smith to put an end to the affair. When the unfortunate girl saw their purpose, she clung convulsively to her father. She spoke not, for her grief was beyond the power of speech; and though her father was forcibly raised up, she still clung to him. But nature could support it no longer: her eyes encountered the fatal rope, that now dangled over his head; and ere the rude hands that would have torn her from all that she loved could effect their purpose, she fell senseless to the ground. A moment sufficed to pass the noose round the neck of the motionless Reuben, who was supported on his legs, and Robin and the smith lengthening their hold of it, dragged him up. *The body, dreadfully* convulsed, ascended but *slowly; more men seized* the rope—the head of the

victim struck heavily against the iron,—with one pull more, it was across it and the neck broken. Loud cries of exultation hailed the appearance of the body as it swung darkly to and fro. "To his house,—to Aldgate!" shouted the beggar;—"To Aldgate!" said the smith, whirling his hammer, as though he were already forcing a door. "To Aldgate, to Aldgate!" rang from mouth to mouth. And away rushed the mob to complete their work by destroying the house and property of the murdered Jew.

Miriam still lay on the spot where she fell when her father was torn from her arms. The mob, in their hurry to run off to Aldgate, had taken no further notice of her, and her situation was unheeded by the few people who still lingered near the body. No sooner was the entrance to his house sufficiently cleared, than Gilbert Cornewaile, assisted by his drawers, conveyed the unfortunate girl into his house. "What though she were a Jewess?" he kindly said; "she was still flesh and blood like himself. She had done bravely in risking her life to save her father, and 'twas a mercy she had not suffered with him. He had a daughter of his own; but the hussy cared little for her old father, and went gadding about with that scapegrace, Osbert the falconer —*hang him*! His dame would look to poor *Miriam.*"

And where was Bonomye all this time? From

the moment he recognised Reuben, he had viewed the whole proceeding in speechless terror, but it was for his own safety; and if another thought at any time divided the miser's attention, it was the remembrance of his lost shekels. The appearance of Miriam at first led him to think that her father might be saved; but he witnessed the affecting exertions of the child to rescue her miserable parent from death without emotion and without a tear. Gladly did his heart beat when, by the death of Reuben and the retreat of the mob, he was relieved from all apprehension for himself, and saw the road open for his escape. As for the stranger to whom he clung, he maintained throughout the same cold demeanour that had marked him from the first; and Bonomye, who never for a moment quitted his hold of him, did not perceive that he was in any degree affected by the tragedy. He spoke not, his arm trembled not,—he never changed his place but when the sway of the crowd compelled him,—and altogether had the air of one who contemplated a scene rendered indifferent to him by habit.

No sooner was the road clear than he resumed his former rapid pace, dragging the still trembling Bonomye along with him. Nor did the Jew bestow a thought upon the situation of Miriam: he was too selfish, too anxious to get away, to waste a moment *upon her. The stranger* was silent until he reached *the bottom of the street*, when he observed,—

"These Londoners are a fierce set, Jew! Didst know the man they have hanged? Thou wouldst have spoken, but that I checked thee."

"Verily," said Bonomye, "I knew him well. We met oft with the changers in Lombard-street, and he owed me moneys that I can ill spare."

"What! money again, man! Hast thou no other thought but of thy gold? Say, dost think the man was innocent? He looked not like a night-brawler or cut-throat."

"He who knoweth all things only can tell," replied the Jew, "I would not answer for any one. 'Tis hard for a poor man to lose that which it costs so much to get. Two hundred marks," said he, talking to himself, "two hundred, good tale and weight—truly I am a miserable man!"

"Tush, man, with marks! Is it not harder for a guiltless man to lose his life than for a vile miser like thee to lose a few pieces? I warrant me, they did him more good than would ever have come of them in thy hands. Did not the girl beg nobly for her father? Speak, man!"

"Ay! yes; you speak well. I had forgot; they call her Miriam," said Bonomye, aroused from another reverie on his lost marks. "She is fair to look upon, but methought Reuben lent too much *unto her vanities*; he was but a poor man. He *would oft speak of* the craft of the Gentile, and yet *lent too ready an* ear to every idle tale of want or

misery; and he clothed his daughter in costly stuffs, such as are not for the women of our people in these days of sorrow. Mayhap, had he not yielded unto her worldly desires he would not have borrowed my silver: two hundred—'twas but a while since that he bought a goodly string of pearls from Adam, of Shoreditch, the goldsmith, for the maiden to bind her hair. Verily, it grieved me to see so many broad pieces cast away, that might have been out at usance, to the profit of her father. If they seize not his goods, those pearls might repay me.—But, stay! will not Master Albert wonder that we tarry so long?"

"Truly, Jew," said the stranger, "thou art a man of stone, and accursed, for thou hast no heart; and as for Albert, he will wait thy coming and mine, though it may be sooner than he would."

"How say you? Did you not tell me that your errand was from him,—that he would speak with me about the moneys?"

"'Twere better not to speak so loud," replied his companion. "What I said was to suit my purpose. We will talk more of it on the bridge."

The bridge gate was now before them,—a tall, embattled tower, that cut off all access to the bridge but through the arch in its centre, defended by a portcullis, the grinning teeth of which were visible *beneath the groove into* which it slid. A lamp, sus*pended from the roof* of the passage, shed a feeble

light for a few paces; and beyond all was darkness, save the faint ray that glimmered through the western window of the chapel of St. Thomas on the centre of the bridge, proceeding from the taper that burned before the altar. The place was dismal, gloomy, and cold, for the wind swept keenly across the bridge, and Bonomye, whose fears were once more awakened by the last speech of the stranger, thought the sharpness of the blast was beyond anything he had ever felt. The water, which could not be discerned for the fog, rippled heavily against the starlings, and a heavy mist was still falling. The Jew could not help thinking that his companion, who now turned into one of the angular projections of the platform, a few yards from the chapel, had chosen a very uncomfortable spot to converse in: he pulled his gaberdine closer around him, and inquired, with a shiver, if they had not better stand more under the shelter of the chapel side.

"No; some of the dotards may be at their prayers and overhear us," said the stranger. "If thou art cold, man, take my cloak; I need it not."

Bonomye did not refuse this offer, and, muffled in its ample folds, with his back turned to the wind, he waited for his companion to begin the conversation.

"You owe Boccanigro and his friends twelve *thousand marks*, Jew,—so I heard from his own *lips this morning*,—and you know not how to repay *them: is it so?*"

"Most true; but I thought I was to speak with Master Albert himself thereupon, or I——"

"Would not have left home," answered his companion with a laugh. "I give thee credit, Jew; but with Albert you cannot treat, and you must answer me!"

"Doubtless I can repay him, if Master Nicholas de Basing——"

"Do all thy hopes rest on 'ifs,' man? Why, then, to end them, I tell thee Basing will not—nay, cannot help thee; that thou hast no one to trust in but me!"

"Friend," said Bonomye, summoning up resolution, "you speak as knowing all things. I do not despair of Master Basing; but—but, if you can stand me in his stead, I may not refuse to treat with you. Albeit, know you not——"

"You must treat with me, whatever my terms may be, if you would save yourself," said the stranger, with the same sneering laugh. "Albert has thy bond in his keeping: what wouldst thou risk to obtain possession of it, and the means to satisfy the king?"

Bonomye, more and more startled at the extent of his companion's knowledge and the tenor of his conversation, was silent.

"I would have thy answer, Jew."

"Though *to regain* my bond would serve me *much, I see not how* it may be done honestly," *added Bonomye, pausing.*

"Does Bonomye, the usurer, talk of honesty?" remarked the stranger, with the laugh that the Jew disliked so much. "Does he think he has any character to lose? Why, man, couldst thou hear what folks say of thee,—and something thou must have heard,—thy speech would not be of honesty. They who know thee curse thee; and they who do not, when they hear others tell of thy ways, curse too, and wonder that one so vile has lived so long.—Honesty, forsooth! Ha! ha!"

"Friend, I know not what you would have me do. I like not your speech; it savours of temptation."

"Well then, Jew, if thou art so dull, keep thy honesty, and thy charity too,—for thou hast as much of the one as of the other. But when the foreigner asks his moneys of thee, and thou hast not wherewith to pay him, and the Royal leech would suck thee too; when thy tale of poverty is derided; when the tormentor is agonising thy vile body, and a horrid death stares thee in the face; try if thy honesty can soothe pain, or make death less terrible. And if thou shouldst yet live, but in want, what will it do for thee? Men will say as thou crawlest along the street, 'See, that is Bonomye; he that was the rich, the hard-hearted usurer, who knew no *pity: is he* not justly served?' and they will spit *on thee and thy* honesty."

The stranger had now renewed in Bonomye all

his former fears, and brought to his recollection all the thoughts that had agitated him in the morning. He stood trembling and irresolute. He felt there was some sinister meaning beneath his companion's words. He had a presentiment of evil, and would have fled from it had he known how. But there was the man standing darkly before him like some malignant spirit, and the Jew fancied he could see his eyes flash through the darkness. Below them the river flowed sullenly along: he was but a weak man, the stranger strong and active,—the parapet low,—one push would send him over. Bonomye could see no hope of escape. And then his gold; how was he to be saved from misery? It was a terrible moment for the Jew. Great was the mental struggle; despite the cold and rain, the perspiration stood on his brow, his teeth chattered, and his whole frame was shaken. He revolved again and again the circumstances in which he was placed, and "Alas!" saith the Chronicle, "the small remains of honesty and good intent were dispersed by the love of Mammon." Bonomye inquired faintly what the stranger would have him do.

"Hark you: Albert is mine enemy; he is your creditor; I would have revenge, you your bond; and," bending his head till the words fell on Bonomye's ear in a low whisper, "he must die, and that *this night.*"

Bonomye, whose agitation had subsided into that

species of desperate resolution which looks not to consequences, and is always greater in proportion to the indecision that precedes it, listened to this proposition without a shudder: he could scarcely believe that he was himself—the same man who, a few moments before, had trembled at mere insinuations. However, he did not reply.

"Has Bonomye's virtue conquered his love of gold and life?" inquired the stranger with a sneer.

"Can we escape without suspicion?"

"I will conduct thee back to thy dwelling."

* * * *

The next morning, Albert de Boccanigro was found murdered in his house in Southwark. By his side was Bonomye, the Jew: in one hand he still held the knife with which he had effected the deed; the other grasped his bond, which he had taken from Albert's chest, that lay open on the floor; and there were several bags of money near him, prepared for removal.

He sat in a state of stupor, with his eyes fixed on the corpse of the merchant; and when seized and interrogated respecting the matter, he laughed wildly, and could utter nothing but "Sathan, Sathan!"

The story coming to the king's ears, he sent brother Simon of St. Sepulchre's, a very holy man, *to visit the* Jew in Newgate, whose pious prayers *had the effect of* restoring him to sense; when he *made known unto* the friar the history of his con-

nection with the stranger,—how he had yielded to temptation, and that, having by his means entered Albert's house, he stabbed him. No sooner had he done so, than his companion discovered himself to be the devil; mocked him, upbraided him with his hard-heartedness; reminded him of his insensibility to the fate of Reuben and his daughter; told him that his iniquities had delivered him into his power; imprinted the mark of his finger on his forehead, where a dark black spot was still visible, and disappeared he knew not how; that he had found himself unable to leave the house, or even to quit the body, by which he sat until found there in the morning.

The Jew, upon this, being brought before the king, "with whom," says the Chronicle, "were many bishops and noble men of the realm, did there relate the same tale unto all present, who heard it with much amaze and wonderment, acknowledging the wisdom and judgment of God made evident therein. And, after a few days, the said Bonomye breathed forth his wicked soul amid inexpressible torments."

The omission of the Chronicler in not informing us of the manner of the Jew's death is luckily supplied by an entry on the Fine Roll of the 48th year of Henry the Third, membrane 7, the translation of *which is as follows*:—

"*William de* Walworth has made a fine with the

Lord the King, by fifty marks, to have the house and tenement in Milk-street, London, which was formerly the property of Bonomye, the son of Cresse the Jew, but now in the king's hands, as his escheat, by reason of the felony of the said Bonomye, who, at the instigation of the devil, did lately slay Albert the Lombard, in Southwark, for which the said Bonomye was burned in the Cheap. And the King's Escheator in London is commanded to give the same William possession of the said house and tenement."

PASQUALE;

A TALE OF ITALY.

BY CAPTAIN MEDWIN.

I PASSED the winter of the year 18— at Rome. Those who, like myself, had been living in the Low Countries, with their eight months of Invierno and four of Inferno, can alone estimate the delights of a residence in a climate where there is rarely either frost or snow, where the air is constantly refreshed by genial showers, and the sky, instead of being *à la* Ruysdael and Van Goen, is of that deep blue, that pure aqua-marine, which we observe in the landscapes of Titian and Sempesta, and which appears, to those who have never been in Italy, to exceed nature. An artist and at Rome, I may be excused for speaking of painting.

I lodged in a house hanging on the side of the Pincian, and overlooking the Piazza de Spagna, a quarter of the city principally inhabited by foreigners, *especially by our own* countrymen, who, wherever *they are, almost form a société* apart. Among those

with whom I became intimate was a general officer, who had served with distinguished reputation in the campaigns of the Peninsular War, and suffering from his wounds, had come with his daughter, rather to enjoy the benefit of the warm South, than to mix much in the gaieties of the place.

Being an invalid like himself, and unable to take much exercise, I had selected, and fortunately found, a spot where I could see, as in a map stretched before me, the seven hills; trace those ruins that still attest the grandeur of the Mistress of the World; feed my imagination with her former glories; and enjoy the magnificent spectacle of nearly the whole city, its palaces, and spires, and domes of innumerable temples, with the greatest of them separated, as it were, from the rest, by the yellow Tiber, whose course, though hidden from the eye, was ever present to the mind. I have seen many enchanting points of view, but perhaps that from my windows might, to the painter, the scholar, the antiquary, the *dévot*, leave nothing to desire. After I had gazed on it for four months, it was still new to me.

General —— was, during three of these, my constant guest; and his aimable and unaffected manners, and almost paternal kindness (for I was *then* beginning life) endeared him to me like a *father. He was* a man of seventy-six years of age, *short in his* person, and with little of military air in

his appearance; but it was in the *morale*, rather than the *physique*, that we might recognise the soldier. His countenance was ordinarily composed and placid, notwithstanding the pain to which an unextracted ball subjected him at every variation of temperature. He spoke of the exploits of the army in which he had had a command with that modest diffidence which sits so well on bravery—of himself, never. I have ever thought and spoken of him as completely coming up to my *beau idéal* of a British officer.

His daughter, for I must now speak of her, was an old maid of forty, and in person, manners, and acquirements, altogether unworthy of her father. She was short, and much freckled with the small-pox; her lips were pinched, and her features contracted, by habitual discontent and acidity of temper, giving her an expression almost of malignity.

No character in the School for Scandal had a tongue more venomous. Her remarks on her own sex were cutting and caustic, and she looked with an evil and jealous eye on those attentions which the young and the lovely (for Rome was never so full of *belle Inglese* as that year) received. But if they were not spared, she made still more the theme of her invective the manners of the Roman dames, among whom she did not forget the names of *Madame M. M. W.* and the still beautiful Pauline *Borghese, a living model*, that revealed the finest

forms in the galleries of the Vatican and the Capitol. The cracked voice issuing from her thin and pale lips still rings in my ears.

But the general, though not altogether blind to her defects, which long habit had taught him to palliate or overlook, was the kindest and most indulgent of parents. She was his only child, in giving birth to whom his wife had died; and this circumstance, perhaps, contributed to endear her the more, and form, as it were, a double link to his affections.

Having now introduced you to these two characters, I must draw a third, and the most important one in the piece.

Shortly after the general's arrival at Geneva the preceding summer, he had taken into his service a courier, of the name of Pasquale. What his previous history may be, or from what part of Italy he came, I know not; but his person was well known to me, from his having been frequently the bearer of notes or messages. He was a dark handsome man, with enormous whiskers and moustaches. Shakspeare says that black men are pearls in ladies' eyes. Geneva being the key, as it were, to Italy, is the great resort of servants out of place; and Pasquale had produced the certificate of an English gentleman—probably forged, or obtained from one of his *compatriots*, who are always ready to accommodate *each other* in that way. His office was not

menial one. His employment consisted in keeping the accounts, and in ordering post-horses when his master travelled. But Pasquale had chosen the appointment after shrewd observation, and with the tact and knowledge which his worldly experience had given him. He had judged that the general, with his wounds and seventy years, had not long to live. He supposed him to be rich, and saw that he had an only daughter. True, she was neither young, nor gifted with any of the qualities to inspire or consolidate affection:—to make it crystallise, to use the expression of a witty French writer. But was he young himself? Yes; but many years of wretchedness and destitution, perhaps of remorse, had left the traces behind, and added at least ten years to his appearance, if not to his age. Besides, he was a courier—a servant; and yet he thought of Rousseau and Madame de Warrens—of Bergami——. In short, the attempt was worth making. She was as good a *partie* as he could expect, and once obtained,

> "He had
> Within the secrets of his power a philter,
> Surer than any instrument of death
> In giving death."

It is supposed that it was during a Swiss tour that Pasquale first made an attack on this redoubtable *fortress. The infirmities* of the general confining *him to the main roads,* his daughter, with her fort

years and unpersonable person, might, without scandal, dispense with a chaperon. In the course of the summer she crossed, *à mulet*, the Tête Noir, and several other Alpine passes; when, by his attentions and kind solicitude for the preservation of her valuable life, he contrived to insinuate himself into the good graces of this antiquated Amazon. His knowledge of several languages, his talent for music, and his other attainments, did not escape observation and admiration; and before they had reached the Simplon, an intimacy was established between them, which left the lady nothing to desire, and the courier nothing to wish, but the death of the father, which, however, in a natural way seemed yet distant. It may be supposed that the person of Miss —— was the least of her attractions in the eyes of Pasquale. He was aware that the general, a man of high family and connections, would spurn the idea of a courier's marrying his daughter; indeed, he knew the world too well to risk the step of eloping, as he might have done, with Miss ——, the inevitable consequence of which would have been, her being disinherited, and cast off for ever: but the general once removed, he had the lady's solemn engagement, which no doubt would have been kept, to share with him her hand and fortune.

The general, however, still lingered on: indeed, *his health*, so far from deteriorating, improved *under the influence* of a milder climate; and

Pasquale, impatient at delay, resolved to dispatch the ill-fated officer. To have poured into his cup a philter at once to extinguish life would have proved too dangerous an experiment; would have excited suspicions, and suspicions which might have been fatal to his hopes; he therefore resorted to a mode of treatment equally certain, but more slow in its effects.

There is a poison, the art of composing which was once supposed to have been lost with the celebrated and infamous Madame de Brinvilliers, but unhappily without good reason. It is called the Aqua Tofana. It is perfectly limpid, and of the colour of water, and, strange to say, almost tasteless. On the Continent, it is the custom to place before each person at dinner a caraffe of the wine of the country, which is drunk in tumblers, as you drink malt liquor at home. The general daily finished one of these, which it was the province of Pasquale (though he did not serve at table) daily to supply, and into this caraffe he daily infused a certain number of drops of this Aqua Tofana—a sufficient quantity, in short, to effect his diabolical purpose. The daughter drank no wine, and had she even taken a single glass, it would have been attended with little or no danger.

Does not *the soul shrink* back within itself, and *shudder at the deliberate*, the cold-blooded, the *homœopathic villany of so* horrible an act—so savage

an atrocity? The human mind may in its casuistry seek to find some justification for Zanga the Moor, for murders committed in the madness, the frenzy, the delirium of passion, or where unutterable wrongs, like those of Beatrice Cenci, drove the sufferer to unutterable deeds, to anticipate the wrath of Heaven long delayed; but this—it is like dissecting the living body, destroying life inch by inch in the torture.

It was not long before the general's appearance indicated a change. I was shocked to observe by his hollow eye, and the black circles round them, by his flushed cheek, his burning hand, and quickened pulse, by a nervous irritability unusual to him, and by a short dry cough, that some new and secret disease was seriously undermining his constitution. He complained of thirst, which nothing could assuage, insomnolency, restlessness, as if by the exhaustion of outworn nature; if he fell into a heavy slumber, it was troubled by horrid dreams and visions, from which he would start in agony, and though naturally free from superstitious terrors, his heated imagination peopled the air with phantoms, which, in his lucid intervals (for he often wandered), he described with such circumstantial minuteness, that the pictures he drew seemed to have a dread *reality* in them, beyond that of this world. No *wonder, then, that* he could not endure solitude. *With the affectionate* kindness of his nature to all

about him, the old man would call for Pasquale, would thank him for his attentions—praise him for his faithful services—commend the sherbet that he made, and receive it from no other hand but his.

And yet, during the day, the poor general took his walk on the Pincian, ate with his usual appetite, and, alas! drank his accustomed flask of Orvieto. But at night the demons returned to haunt his couch. His physician was a young Englishman, who had just finished his studies, and taken out his diploma at one of the Scotch Universities. But though not deficient in talent, he was unacquainted with the treatment of the disorders peculiar to the climate, or the remedies to be adopted. This case, however, of the general's might well baffle his skill, and set at naught all theories.

My poor friend at length consented, though too late, to send for the most eminent of the Roman practitioners, and scarcely had the patient finished giving him an account of his symptoms, when, without hesitation, he said, "*Signore, siete invenenato!*" I was present, and the general might well be thunderstruck at this hasty and indiscreet announcement. The doctor not only asserted that the malady was occasioned by poison, but even stated the peculiar poison administered to him; and added, that there was no antidote which could counteract its deadly *and mortal effects.*

The first step was to send for the police, and *Pasquale and his laquais* were examined, but nothing

was elicited by the *procès verbal.* The suspicion was, however, so strong against them, that they were thrown into prison to await their trial.

In the mean time the general's health suffered an hourly yet gradual deterioration, and life flickered in his wasting frame, like a lamp that is losing its vivifying oil. It was a melancholy sight, heart-rending to those who knew and loved him as I did, to perceive my poor dear friend day by day hanging suspended over the brink of the grave. The consciousness of his approaching end was of itself sufficiently agonising, but it was rendered doubly so by the tortures that accompanied it, the fire within that could not be extinguished—a vitality of death.

Thus perished General ——. He who had escaped the shock of many a battle-field, who had passed unharmed through showers of balls, was doomed to fall ingloriously and miserably by the hand of an assassin.

It was the Settimana Santa, and his funeral was attended not only by all the English, but most of the foreigners of distinction then assembled to witness its imposing ceremonies. The melancholy *cortége* took up its long line in the Piazza de Spagna, preceded by the catafalque, at nine o'clock in the evening, to convey those remains which should have found a distinguished place among the heroes of his country, to the new burial-ground, which had been unwillingly accorded, through the intermediation of Cardinal Gonsalis, by the Pope Pius to us

heretics. That cemetery being at the farther extremity of the city, the procession would have to traverse its whole length.

You may form some notion of what a funeral by torch-light must be in Rome. And such a funeral! I was never sensible of the marvellous beauty of the ancient statues till I saw them in the halls of the Vatican thus illuminated; but still more sublime was the Eternal City thus seen, and on such an occasion.

We viewed on all sides the tottering porticos, the isolated columns, which told of the ravages of the Goths and Vandals,—those hordes who, after gorging themselves with the blood of the vanquished; those barbarians who, insatiate of slaughter, when they had nothing living left to destroy, vented their jealous rage on those creations of genius, which, like the spectres of their victims, seemed to stand in mockery and defiance. Every gorgeous fane, every triumphal arch, every colossal peristyle seemed an insult to those savages, a reproach to their ignorance, a record of their shame. They could shatter the mighty giantess,—tear her limb from limb; but the Torso, like that of the Vatican, the admiration of Michael Angelo in his blindness, yet remained to suggest what he had been. They could melt the Roman cement, enwrap her domes in flames, throw *down her statues from* their heights that frowned on *them, and, when tired* of their labour of destruction, *cumber the bed of* the Tiber with her mutilated

fragments; but happily the Iconoclasts had other employment in their sacrilegious hands,—other neighbouring cities to ravage,—the abodes of other gods to deface.

It was impossible for the coldest, the most insensible and ignorant of our train, to pass without emotion these monuments of Roman greatness, seen as they were by the broad effulgence of the torches, that, flashing against them, reflected their vast outline or individual features, made more distinct by the deep shade, the solid pitchy darkness, in which the background was steeped.

Neither my companion nor myself spoke, or expressed our admiration; it was too profound for words. Self-absorbed, we allowed our ideas to wander, lost in the past. We neither gave the buildings names, nor suggested doubts as to the period of their construction,—whether they were of the time of Julius Cæsar or of the Antonines.

Nothing to me is so delightful as the mystery, the vagueness that hangs over most of what remains of Rome; for it is this very scepticism and uncertainty that allow the imagination to revel in a world of dreams, fantasies, and visions, each more enchanting than the last. What is so sublime in poetry as some passage which is made intelligible to us by a sort of divination, not from the construction *of the words* themselves, but from some profound *and metaphysical* idea that defied them in the *author? But is* all poetry to be compared with a

nameless ruin? We fill up the breaches that barbarism and time have made,—we people the steps of the portico with crowds rushing up them to the festival or the sacrifice,—we clothe in their classical costumes their priests, their senators, their patricians, their half-naked citizens,—we hear their shouts before the doors,—we listen to the brazen chariots ringing on the pavement, the clang of trumpets that announce their consuls, surrounded by the lictors or tribunes: we overleap the view of ages, and, almost forgetting what we are, identify ourselves with the throng.

Awaking from this reverie, I could scarce recall my scattered senses, or return to the realities of life. I contemplated with a mixture of sorrow and regret the mouldering mass of ruins,—pillars, cornices, and columns, broken and in fragments, around,—those ashes of centuries, that dusty nothing, so well harmonising with our own feelings, with the solemn scene, with that remnant of mortality,—the ruins of him whom we were about to consign to kindred ruins,—ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

All the magnificence of the past had faded away. The calm of desolation, the solitude of the tomb had succeeded to the festive shouts which had rung in my ears: Life had resigned the victory to Death.

The Protestant burial-ground stood apart from the *city, and was at that time* only hedged in by a slight *fence of stakes, some* of which were removed to give *us entrance.* The graves were yet young, their

tenants few in number. Most of the mounds had not even a headstone; whilst here and there a monument, surmounted by an urn of classical form and elegant design, showed by the glittering whiteness of the marble that it was fresh from the hand of the sculptor. They showed themselves in strong relievo from the ancient wall of the city, which bounded the cemetery on the side of the Campagna, —that wall was partly hidden by a dark mass, whose point lifted itself above the horizon. It was the pyramid of Caius Cestius, and seemed to frown in proud defiance, a giant among the pigmies, on the intruders on its solitary greatness. They too seemed to have chosen the verge of the inclosure, as unwilling to mingle their clay with that of an idolatrous race and an outworn creed.

And who was Caius Cestius? The annals of his country contain no records of his deeds—his name is not even chronicled in story—who was he, that he should have thus pavilioned his ashes, whilst those of so many heroes and patriots lie undistinguishably mingled in the dust of her ruins? What a lesson to mortality is here! What a homily to tell of the more than empty honours of the tomb! *

A great poet has said that it would make one in love with death, to sleep beneath the green leaf and blue sky of Rome. I reflected then, and have *often since thought* of his words; but they have *not lessened the* regret that I should myself feel at

* Sepulcri supervacuos honores.

lying far from my own race,—regret that one who had merited so well of his country should have an undistinguished grave among strangers in a foreign land.

I now return to the daughter. The day after his memorable burial, through the interest of the pope's prime minister, she was sent out of Rome, and has hid herself in some retirement, where it is to be hoped that her story is unknown. May a life of contrition and penitence have reconciled her to her God!

Pasquale (the other servant having succeeded in entirely clearing himself from any participation in the murder) remained a long time in prison; with the usual dilatoriness of the Roman tribunals, his trial being deferred from month to month. At length he was brought to the bar; but no English were at that time in Rome to conduct the prosecution. Though the circumstantial evidence was strong, no positive proofs of his guilt appeared. He had the hardihood in his defence to charge the daughter with being his paramour, produced letters of hers to confirm it, and moreover to insinuate that she had been guilty of the parricide; an accusation that, however false, being coupled with her sudden departure from Rome, and neglect to appear against the murderer, carried weight with it in the minds of the judges. In short, Pasquale was acquitted, and *suffered to go at large,* and add to the catalogue of *his crimes,—a tiger let* loose among mankind.

After his release from St. Angelo, Pasquale,

being too well known in the Roman states, and unwilling to pass through Florence, where he had been strongly suspected some years before of being concerned in the robbery of an English lady's jewels at Schneider's, obtained a passage from Civita Vecchia, on board of a felucca for Genoa. It was not long, however, before he associated himself with a Frenchman of the name of Duberg, who followed the trade, not uncommon at that place, and in most parts of Italy, of *mezzano*. Their business, among other branches of it, is to be intermediaries, as indeed the word implies, between the robbers and others, who have objects of art to sell to foreigners, and who, like the Povere Vergognose, have too much shame, or apprehension of the consequences of their frauds, to show their faces in their transactions. These gentry ply generally about the Exchange of the Georgio, and it was there that Pasquale, from his knowledge of the language, contrived to inveigle an Englishman into their nets. His name I now forget; nor is it material. He was the captain of a merchant-vessel then lying in the port; but he was a virtuoso in belles, not in the beaux arts.

The churches of Genoa are perhaps the most splendid in Italy. It is the only state that has preserved almost entire its monastic institutions and the immense revenues of its clergy, and the *Fêtes d'Eglise* are celebrated there with a pomp that I have observed nowhere else. Brilliant illuminations, the walls, the pillars completely covered with crimson

damask, give San Siro the semblance of a theatre, and we might almost fancy ourselves, so exquisite is the music, at the representation of "Mose en Egitto." Indeed, it is not uncommon to adapt the operas of Rossini, or any favourite maestro of the day. But it was not the gorgeous dresses of the officiating priests, or the elevation of the host through clouds of incense, which had charms for the stranger, but a Genoese lady, on whom his eyes were riveted during the mass, who might have sat to Raphael for one of his Madonnas. Pasquale, who was his courier, and had not been blind to the admiration of the Englishman, on his way to the hotel, told him that he was not only acquainted with the lady's name, but that he could obtain him an interview with the incognita. After a due delay, in which innumerable difficulties were to be overcome, he fixed a night for the *dénouement* of the intrigue.

That part of Genoa which lies between the long line of streets of palaces, the Bubbi, the Nuova, and Novissima, and the harbour, is a labyrinth of narrow lanes which it requires a clue to unravel. After threading many of them he laid a "*guet-apens*" for his victim, and the two ruffians, after robbing him of his watch and money, left him for dead. But he did not die. Pasquale found the police of Genoa very different from that of Rome. The crime did not escape the vigilance of its emissaries, and these worthy confederates were condemned to the galleys for life. The Bagni stand between the outer and inner

port, called the D'Arena. They are islanded between the two, and communicate with the entrance into the latter by means of a drawbridge, which is only raised to allow vessels to pass, or the convicts to go to their work in the dockyard.

This is perhaps the most difficult of prisons to escape from, because the only exit from the port is by the city gate, always well guarded, or by that of the mole, equally so; and the Pier d'Arena, on the extremity of the barrier, is a mile across.

There was, however, an old *galère*, whose time being expired, was permitted occasionally to supply his brethren in iniquity on fête days with provisions, —*l'argent fait tout*,—and Pasquale had not come unprovided.

I know from this man that the disguise of a sailor had been brought him piece by piece, and a file; and that having separated himself from his comrade, (for the convicts are chained two and two,) he contrived to sunder the bars of the window looking into the port, and one dark night stepped into the water, and swam to the Pier d'Arena.

But scarcely had he landed, when information having been given by his comrade to the keeper, the firing of a gun announced the escape of a convict. With all his vigilance he could not avoid falling *again* into the hands of justice, and was led into *the Basque* between two soldiers at the very moment *I was about* to visit it. And in the Basque let us *leave him.*

THE MAN IN THE SPANISH CLOAK;

OR,

THREE NOTCHES FROM THE DEVIL'S TAIL.

I HAD often met with him before in my travels, and had been much struck with the peculiar acumen of his remarks whenever we entered into conversation. His observations were witty, pungent, and sarcastic; but replete with knowledge of men and things. He seemed to despise book-knowledge of every kind, and argued that it only tended to mislead. "I have good reason to be satisfied on this point," he said to me one day at Vienna. "History is not to be relied on; a fact is told a hundred different ways; the actions of men are misrepresented, their motives more so; and as for travels and descriptions of countries, manners, customs, &c., I have found out that they are the most absurd things in the world,—mere fables and fairy *tales. Never waste* your time on such trash!"

I again met this gentleman in Paris; it was at a

salon d'écarté; and he amused me much by informing me of the names and circumstances of the most distinguished persons present. Whether English, French, or Germans, he knew something of the private history of each, some ridiculous adventure or silly *contre-temps.* I marvelled how he could have collected so great a store, such as it was, of anecdote and information; how he carried it all in remembrance; and still more at the perfect *sang-froid* with which he detailed these things under the very noses of the persons concerned, who would, had they heard them, no doubt have made as many holes in his body with "penetrating lead" as there are in a cullender.

To avoid getting into any scrape myself, I invited this *well-informed* gentleman to spend an evening with me at my hotel, where, over a bottle of claret, we might discuss some of those amusing matters, more, at least, to my own ease. Before we separated, I pointed out a certain Englishman to him, who was playing high, and did not notice us; I asked him if he knew anything respecting that gentleman. I had my private reasons for asking this question, unnecessary now to mention, and was pleased to find my colloquial friend knew, as they say, "all about him;" so we parted, with a promise on his side that on the following evening he would *visit me, and* give me every particular.

He came punctually to appointment, but I could

not prevail on him to put off his large Spanish cloak, what they call technically an "*all-rounder;*" he complained of cold, said he had been accustomed to *a warm climate*, and sat down just opposite to me, when, without hesitation, in a sort of business-like way, he entered at once into the details I most wished to know respecting the young Englishman we had left at the *salon d'écarté;* and left no doubt on my mind, from some circumstances I already knew respecting him, that the account was most veracious. I fell into a fit of musing in consequence of his narration, which he did not interrupt by a single remark; but, fixing his eyes upon me, seemed to be amusing himself with watching the progress of my thoughts.

"It will never do!" said I, forgetting I was not alone; "he is not worthy of her."

I stopped, and the stranger rose, gave me a peculiar significant look, and was retiring, but I would not permit it; and, apologising for my abstraction, insisted that he should finish the bottle with me; so he sat down again, and we tried to converse as before, but it would not do.

There we sat, facing each other, and both nearly silent; and now it was that I remembered I had never once seen the stranger without this same Spanish cloak,—a very handsome one it is true, richly *embroidered, and* decorated with Genoese *velvet, and a superb clasp* and chain of the purest

gold and finest workmanship. I pondered on this circumstance, as I recollected that even in Italy and the Ionian Islands, where I had before met him by some extraordinary chance, as well as at Constantinople and at Athens, he had always been enveloped in this same most magnificent mantle. At last I thought of the fable of the man, the sun, and the wind; so concluded that he wore this Spanish cloak to guard him equally from heat and cold, to exclude the sun's rays and the winter's winds; or, perhaps, I argued, he wears it to conceal the seedy appearance of his inner garments, or sundry deficiencies of linen, &c. "Things will wear out, and linen will lose its snowy whiteness. But what the devil have I to do with the matter? Let him wear his cloak, and sleep in it too, if it please him: why should I trouble my head about it?"

"You are returning to England soon, sir," said, at length, the cloaked stranger (but I am certain that I had not intimated such intention to him); "I am proceeding there myself on some pressing business, and will do myself the honour of there renewing our acquaintance."

I paused and hesitated ere I replied to this proposition. It is one thing to invite an agreeable stranger to drink a bottle of claret with you at an hotel in Paris, and another to bring him to *the sanctuary* of your home, to the fireside of an *Englishman*, to the board of your ancestors, to

uffer him to gaze freely on the faces of your sisters, nd to pay his court at his ease to every other female elative beneath the paternal roof!

The stranger saw my embarrassment, and seemed o penetrate the cause. He gave me a smile of most nexplicable expression as he said,

"Your late father, Sir George F——, and myself, vere old acquaintances. We spent some months ogether at Rome, and met with a few adventures here, which I dare say have never reached the ears of his son."

This was said in his usual sarcastic way; but I could not endure that he should allude in the slightest manner of disrespect to my deceased father; so I answered, with much reserve, and some sign of displeasure, "That I did not wish to pry into the youthful follies of so near a relative; at the same time I thought it odd I never should have heard my father mention that he had formed any particular intimacy with any one at Rome, but, on the contrary, had even been given to understand that all his recollections of the Eternal City were rather of an *unpleasing* nature."

"Did he never mention to you the baths of Caracalla?" demanded my strange guest; "but it matters little, for the son of Sir George F—— merits every attention from me *on his own* account, *as well as for the sake of another*——" He did not *nish the sentence;* but, folding his cloak more

closely round him, he made me a profound bow something between an Eastern salaam and the bow of a dancing-master, and politely took his leave.

For two or three days I thought much of this extraordinary man; but after that time I became so deeply interested in a Platonic *liaison* with Madame de R——, the beautiful wife of a Parisian banker that I forgot him altogether. I had to read, as well as to write, sentimental *billets-doux* sometimes twice a day, for so often they passed between my fair Platonist and myself. I had to select all her books her flowers, and to choose her ribbons. I know not how it might have ended, for affairs began to wear a very critical aspect; but I was summoned to England by an express. My beloved mother was dangerously ill. I tore myself away, disregardful of the tears that gathered in the brightest pair of eyes in the world, and travelled post-haste to Calais.

Scarcely had I put my foot on the deck of the vessel ere I perceived my acquaintance of the Spanish cloak. There he was, walking up and down the deck,—tall, erect, gentlemanly; there was his magnificent cloak, without a wrinkle or a spot, the gloss still on it. I sat still, and watched him, not without a sensation of annoyance, as I was not at all in the humour just then to enter *into* conversation. I was uneasy respecting the *life of an* only parent, and I had just parted with *one of the* prettiest women in France, at the

moment, too, when we both wished Platonism in the same place its founder was, dead and buried; but I might have saved myself the trouble of being annoyed, for the stranger did not seem to recognise me, nor wish to speak to any one. His carriage was lofty and reserved; his eye was proud, and sought to *overlook* the rest of the passengers as unworthy of its notice; and so marked was his avoidance of myself, that I began to feel piqued, and to imagine that my own personal appearance, if not our former knowledge of each other, might have gained for me the honour of his notice. Never before did I see so imperious an eye, or so magnificent a cloak!

The passage was a very boisterous one; and all the passengers, both male and female, began to show evident signs enough that the human animal was never intended by Nature to ride upon the ocean's billows. Strange sounds were heard from the very depths of human stomachs, as if in response to the roaring of the winds and the dashing of the waves! I began to sympathise most sincerely with the unhappy sufferers; for such sights and sounds are sure to affect the feelings of those who both see and hear. In short, I began to look grave and become squeamish. I saw nothing but livid lips and blue cheeks around me,—a perfect pandæmonium of wretchedness; yet there walked the stately *man in the cloak, perfectly* unmoved in countenance *and stomach. I perceived* he had lighted a cigar,

which glowed of a bright red colour, and threw a glow over his handsome features.

I grew still worse, and my disorder was coming to its climax, when the eye of the stranger for the first time condescended to notice me, and he bowed ceremoniously, with a smile which seemed to say, "I wish you joy, young man, of your sea-sickness!" I turned from him, and sincerely wished him in the same condition as myself and the other victims of the wrath of Neptune. He advanced towards me.

"You look ill, sir!" he exclaimed. "Take the advice of an old sailor; only try one of my cigars; *they are not of common use;* one or two whiffs will drive away your nausea. I never knew them fail."

Now I loathe smoking at all times; it is a vulgar and idle amusement, fit only, as a modern writer says, for "the swell-mob;" but at this moment the thought of it was execrable. I could have hurled the stranger, when he offered me one of his cigars already ignited, into the sea.

"I never smoke, sir," said I, pettishly, "and I always get as far away as I can from those who do. May I thank you to go a little to the windward?"

"My dear sir, do not be obstinate," said the pertinacious stranger; "we have many hours before we shall touch the shore, for you see both wind and tide are against us. I assure you the remedy is *always efficacious*;" and he handed me a lighted *cigar, immediately* under my nose.

I snatched at the burning preparation, and flung it overboard, with an exclamation of no gentle kind; it dropped into the boiling waves, making a noise like a hissing red-hot iron, as it is put by the smith into the water of the stone cistern.

"It is not of the slightest consequence," said my tormentor, affecting to believe I had dropped the cigar by accident, "I have plenty more in my case;" and with the most provoking coolness he lighted another from his own, and presented it to me. I was puzzled what to do, for the courtesy of this man was extreme. I was exceedingly sick, and wished to get rid of him; for who likes to have a witness during the time of nature's distress? I therefore accepted his cigar, and turned from him, with a very equivocal bow of acknowledgment.

There was something of a very refreshing nature in the smell of this extraordinary-looking cigar, which was burning steadily in my hand. I resolved to try its boasted efficacy, and accordingly put it to my lips, and inhaled its fragrance. In a moment I was well, more than well; for a delicious languor seized me. After that, my nerves were braced, invigorated; I felt as a hunter does after a long day's sport, hungry almost to famine, and I descended to the saloon, and called lustily to the steward to bring me a cold fowl, a plate of ham, and a bottle of *porter. No more nausea*, no more livid lips and *blue cheeks. All of a* sudden I became eloquent,

poetical, and brimful of the tender passion. I wished to console some of my fair companions who were languishing around me, and offered my cigar to all who would accept it. Had it not been for an occasional thought of my mother's illness, which would intrude upon me whether I wished it or not, what folly and entanglement might I have got into with a pretty milliner on board, just returned from Paris, with fashions in her head, and French levity in her heart!

I ought to have acknowledged my obligation to the stranger for his remedy; but I had conceived so insuperable a dislike to him, that I could not account for it, and my only wish was to escape from his society at Dover, as I feared he would offer to accompany me to London, and I could hardly refuse him after the service he had rendered me. I therefore lingered below some few minutes when we arrived, and looked cautiously around me when I ascended the companion-ladder; but the stranger was gone. I saw no trace of his august person then, or his superb Spanish cloak.

I hastened on with four horses to —— Square, and met my weeping sisters. My mother still breathed; but that was all. The physicians could not comprehend her malady, but agreed to call it a general debility, an exhaustion of the vital energies, *without* any particular complaint. She was *extremely weak*, but knew me instantly, and smiled *her welcome* as I knelt and kissed her hand.

My mother was only of the middle age, which made it more strange that physical weakness should thus overpower her. I inquired at what time she was first seized; and on reference to my note-book, found out that her first appearance of illness was at the *precise hour* when the stranger in the Spanish cloak was sitting with me at my hotel, and talking to me of my father. Well! what of that? it was a mere chance!

It is no use disguising it. I am naturally superstitious. We can no more help the frailties of our minds than the blemishes of our features. As I sat by my declining mother's side, I pondered again and again on this mysterious stranger. I recollected how he had cured me of my sickness in a moment; how wonderfully he knew the private history of every individual; and I ended by believing that there was something of a supernatural agency about him. "Perhaps," thought I, starting up suddenly, and speaking aloud, "perhaps this wonderful cigar of his might recover my beloved mother." I searched every pocket, hoping that a remnant of it might have remained; but no; it had been whiffed away by the ladies in the cabin, and I had not a vestige left.

When once an idea seizes hold on the mind, it scarcely ever lets go its hold. I began to consider *myself mad, yet could* not prevent myself from *going out I knew not* whither, to make inquiries for

the cloaked stranger, and request him to give me another of his marvellous cigars. As I passed Louisa and Emily, my sisters, and ——, now no more, they were alarmed by the wildness of my looks, and endeavoured to arrest my progress.

"I go to seek a remedy for my mother," exclaimed I, breaking from them, and I darted from the house.

I made inquiries at all the principal hotels and club-houses for the stranger in the magnificent cloak. The waiters at the Oriental, the Travellers, and the Albion, had all seen him, but knew not his address or name. I sought him in the parks, at the exhibitions; but could not find him. At length I thought of the British Museum, but *why* I did so appears to me most mysterious. I drove instantly thither, and ran through all the rooms with the most searching gaze. In George the Fourth's splendid library there, seated at his ease by special permission from Sir Henry Ellis, I beheld the man I sought, with a large folio volume of Eastern learning spread open before him.

I felt ashamed to address him; for had I not been most uncourteous, most repulsive to him? and now I wanted another favour. I stood before the table at which he sat, and watched his countenance as he seemed engrossed with his Oriental literature; but it was only for a moment, for he raised his *eyes by some* sudden impulse, and fixed them straight *upon me.*

The stranger acknowledged me not even by a bow or a look of recognition. I knew not what to say to him, yet the case was urgent.

"Pardon me, sir," I stammered out, "I fear I interrupt you; but——"

"Proceed, sir," said the stranger, coldly. "I am always ready to listen to the son of Sir George F——, for I owe to the father some obligation."

"You possess the power of allaying the most tormenting sickness by some mysterious drug or preparation," I said, hesitating as I spoke: "that was no common cigar. Have you other remedies?"

"A thousand," replied the stranger. "Pray go on."

"My mother lies dangerously ill; can you restore her?"

"May I behold the patient?" demanded the stranger, and an inexpressible glance flashed from his brilliant eyes.

What made me tremble at this natural request? for such it might have been deemed, since every medical man has free liberty to inquire into the symptoms of the case before he prescribes.

Fixedly did his eyes rest on mine; they seemed as if turned to stone, for they moved not in the slightest degree.

"I will *describe* my mother's case to you, sir," I *said, evasively.*

He made me no answer; but, casting down his

eyes, he calmly resumed his reading, and I walked up and down the spacious apartment, in which there were not above a dozen other persons, in a state of mind resembling a chaos, occasionally glancing with angry eyes at the reading stranger, who seemed perfectly composed, and unconscious of my presence.

"What a fool am I!" said I, mentally; "what *harm* can this man do my dying mother? But then, *she* may see him—this being that resembles a demi-god—and *she* too of so peculiar a mind, so enamoured of all that is great and wonderful; so romantic, too! Wretch that I am! is my beloved mother's life to be sacrificed—at least the chance of saving her—to a wild and jealous fantasy? No!" and I walked up again to the table.

The stranger was rising as I approached him, had closed his book, and returned it to the librarian. He would have passed me, but I laid my hand upon his arm.

"Most extraordinary being!" said I, "*come*, I conjure you, and save my mother!"

He entered my carriage without saying a word, and silently followed me to the apartment of my languishing parent, who was dozing in a sort of lethargic stupor, that appeared to be the precursor of death. My two sisters stood gazing on her pale features, and —— was holding her thin white hand *in one of hers*, and bathing it with her tears.

The stranger took my mother's hand from hers,

and—I cannot be mistaken, for I watched every movement—some strong agitation, some convulsive spasm, passed over his countenance as he looked upon that face which never had its equal yet on earth; but, whatever was his emotion, he soon mastered it, and desired that a silver plate and lamp might be brought to him.

From a small crystal box the stranger took out a brown preparation, and, breaking it in two, placed them on the silver plate; then with a slip of paper lighted from the lamp he ignited the substance so placed, which sent up a pale blue flame, and a most intoxicating odour. He desired that my mother should be raised in bed, even to a sitting posture, when he placed the blazing plate immediately beneath her nostrils, and some portion of the actual flame entered and curled about her face. My sisters shrieked, but —— spake not a word, and I waited the result with agonised impatience.

"She revives! she revives!" exclaimed the latter, "and my blessed aunt will live!"

It was true. Years have gone by, and *my mother is still alive.* Never has she had an hour's illness from that hour. Was I grateful to the stranger for saving a life so prized? No. In my heart I loathed him at the very time he was heaping benefits upon me. And why? I detected a look of wonder, and *admiration, and gratitude*, and a smile of ineffable *beauty directed towards* him by one who——

Disguising as well as I was able the hatred that swelled within my heart, I offered to place on the finger of this mysterious visitant a ring of great value, that belonged once to my father. He started as he saw it, and pressing a secret spring in it that I knew not of, restored it to me.

"It was a present from myself to him at Rome," he said, and his voice faltered, "for a signal benefit conferred. Behold! there is my own miniature!"

And it was so. Most exquisitely painted was there concealed a minute resemblance of himself. I now perceived, and I cursed him in my heart for it, that —— retained the ring, after having expressed her astonishment at the fidelity of the likeness. I rudely snatched it from her hand, and threw the ring from me.

"Theodore," said my mother, "give me that ring. I know full well who it was presented that ring to him who is now no more. Marquis! I must speak to you alone, but not now. Come hither to-morrow. Now, I beseech you, retire!"

How dreadful is it to bear about with us the seeds of insanity! I have felt them shoot and grow within me from my childhood. The fibres had twined about my very being. *I knew* that madness must some time or other scorch my brain; I was full of *delusions;* I could behold nothing clear with my *mental vision.* I once heard a learned physician say *to my father,* "Take care of him, sir. Excitement

may drive that boy mad. Do not let him study too much; and, above all, I trust he will never meet with disappointment in any affair of the heart."

Have I met with such? Let me not think about it, or——*And yet I am not mad now.*

From this time I became gloomy and morose, and always worse whenever this accursed man in the Spanish cloak came to the house, which now was very often. He charmed all but myself. I hated the sound of his voice. My sisters would come and try to soothe me into sociability and calmness. I repelled them with harshness and severity; and even when my gentle cousin tried each soft persuasive art to lead me to his presence, I taunted her in the cruellest manner with her hypocrisy, as I chose to call her blandishments, and bade her "go to the fascinating marquis, and heap her witcheries on him." Nothing could exceed the patience of this devoted being, her sweetness of temper, her angelic forbearance, but my own ferocity and hellish brutality; yet how did I love her, even when I bitterly reviled her! Once, when I observed that ring upon her finger, which my mother had permitted her to wear,—that ring, bearing the portrait of *that man*,—I absolutely spurned her from my presence, and wonder now that I did not murder her.

Cloud after cloud obscured the light of reason in *my brain, and it was* deemed advisable by those who *loved me still, notwithstanding* my growing malady,

to have some one with me night and day, lest I should lay violent hands upon myself, as if a life like mine were worth the caring for.

An intelligent young man, one of my tenants, accepted this painful task, and he performed it with gentleness and fidelity. He soon perceived that I grew more furious when the voice or the name of the Marquis —— met my ears. He mentioned this circumstance to my mother, and from that time the marquis was not permitted to enter the house. I heard of this at first with incredulity, then with complacency. By degrees I grew calmer. I was afterwards shown a letter from the cloaked stranger, dated Rome; and it confirmed their assertions. I once more enjoyed the society of my family, and basked in the smiles of my beloved cousin. She was all kindness, all attention; and I began to flatter myself that the ardent love I had borne her from my very boyhood was returned. It was her reserve that before drove me from my country.

To my great astonishment and delight, that young Englishman who had interested me so much in the *salon d'écarté* at Paris, was formally refused by her who was dearer to me than life. He was of ancient family, and of great possessions; I knew he loved *her, and feared* he would gain her: but on my saying *one day, as if* by accident, in her presence, "that I *feared S*—— gamed high, and consequently was not

worthy of the regard of any woman of discretion," she gave me a smile of ineffable sweetness, and told me, "It was of little consequence to her his frailties or his virtues; for she had long determined to give him a refusal, and, in fact, had done so before he went to Paris."

I considered the *manner* of my cousin, more than her mere words, as encouragement to myself, and with all the ardour of my nature declared to her my passion. These were her words in reply: "Theodore, I pretend not to misunderstand you; and, if it be any comfort to you, believe that I most tenderly return your affection. But, oh, my beloved cousin! think how you have been afflicted,—and then ask yourself whether I ought to listen to your proposals? whether you ought to marry? Theodore, I solemnly promise you that, for your sake, never will I wed another; but, oh! ask me not to become your wife whilst you are subject to such a fearful malady."

In vain I represented to her that my late mental affliction had been caused wholly by my fear of losing her, as I believed that detested foreigner was exactly the man to charm her, and thus I considered her lost to me for ever.

"This, dear Theodore," she answered, "is one of your delusions. You had no cause why you should *form such a preposterous* notion,—a man old enough *to be my father, and*——"

"That is true," said I, "there is disparity of years; but then what a splendid being!"

"Yes," she replied coldly, "he wears a most magnificent cloak."

"Not always, sure?" I asked inquiringly, for I had never entered the room where he was, since he had cured my mother. "Did he not remove it when he dined and drank tea with you so often, and stayed so late, that I could have torn him to pieces for it?"

"Softly, my beloved cousin," said the sweet girl, placing her soft hand before my lips. "Why are you so excited now when talking of this stranger? *Your* mother, Theodore, has been restored by him; and for that service what do we not all owe him?"

"Was it for this," I said, "from gratitude alone, you wore that ring?"

"Yes, from gratitude only. Are you now satisfied?"

"Blessings on you, dearest, for your kindness!" I continued. "But say, did you ever see him without that cloak?"

"Never, Theodore, never. It was always too hot or too cold; or he was poorly, or some excuse or other. We never could persuade him to take off that cloak."

I fell into a long reverie after this; nor could I *blame* her for her decision. I knew myself that my *brain was* not steady, and consequently I had no *right to* marry, to entail on my innocent offspring

such a calamity. But then this inexplicable stranger; —perhaps he had the power to cure me,—he had already performed almost a miracle; if he could but settle my head, my beloved cousin would become mine, and I should be free from those fears that were constantly besetting me of becoming incurably mad.

Nothing would now do but my immediately setting out for Rome to seek the stranger with the large Spanish cloak. My mother did not think it advisable that I should go alone; so it was determined that she, with Louisa and Emily, accompanied by our sweet relative, should bear me company to Italy, and thither we accordingly went. We lingered not on our progress to look at curiosities, or paintings, or prospects. We journeyed as fast as four horses could carry us, and arrived quite safe at imperial Rome.

I was sorry to learn that the Marquis —— was now at Naples; and, after settling my family in an elegant villa a few miles from modern Rome, I set off in quest of the man for whom I had an antipathy, powerful, incurable; and for what purpose? To request his aid, mysterious, perhaps sinful, to cure me of a disorder, of which the consciousness was part of its calamity. The raving madman, at least, is saved from *knowing* his own misery.

I had not been an hour at Naples, attended by my *favourite servant, the* young man who once acted to

me as my keeper, when I saw from the window of my hotel the cloaked stranger pass with a lady on his arm. But I hesitated not,—I might lose him for ever; so I ran into the street, and hastily accosted him.

What I said to him I know not, for my words were wild and ambiguous; but he promised that he would dine with me the following day, although his manners were even more reserved than when I spoke to him at the Museum.

Our instincts ought ever to be attended to; the brute creation follow nothing else, and *they* commit no sin. The first time I saw this stranger, he was looking at an inscription at Athens, and I felt a secret desire to get from his presence; but he entangled me with his talk, his knowledge of everything around, his high bearing, his intelligent eyes, and his superb Spanish cloak.

Again we were seated at the same table, and I again requested him to remove his mantle.

"Not yet," he said significantly; "but after the cloth is removed I will, if you still wish it, take off this upper clothing."

Oh, how sarcastically were these words pronounced! My heart beat violently; I could not eat, and became abstracted and melancholy; not a word was *said respecting* my request to him, nor did he ask *me why* I sought him. He ate in silence, and *seemed to* have forgotten he was not alone.

When the table was cleared, the stranger coolly took a book from under his cloak, and began to read; whilst I, pondering on all I had ever known of him, began to feel the most burning desire to see this man once *without* his cloak, and was determined to do my utmost to effect it.

"The cloth *is* now removed, signor," said I, "and you promised *then* you would take off that everlasting garment."

"It displeases you, then?" retorted my companion. "*Is it not unsafe to penetrate below the exterior of all things?* Is not the surface ever the most safe? Is not the *outer* clothing of nature ever the most beautiful to the eye? What deformity dwells in mines, in caverns, at the bottom of the ocean! Nature wears a cloak as beautiful as mine; do you wish also to strip off her covering as well as mine?"

"At this moment, signor," said I gloomily, "I was not thinking of Nature at all, but of the strangeness of your ever wearing that cloak."

"Was it for this you came from England, Sir Theodore?" inquired the marquis, "and sought me at Naples? The knowledge, I should deem, could never compensate you for the loss of your cousin's society so many days."

"It was not for this I sought you, noble marquis," I *replied, piqued at his irony*; "but when a man *ever wears a cloak, it must be for some purpose.*"

"Granted," slowly said my companion; "I have such purpose."

"Which you promised to unfold!" I exclaimed, with pertinacity. "Is it still your pleasure so to do?"

"*It is necessary first that we should have no intruders*," he answered, with a tone that froze me to the heart. Oh, how cutting, how sarcastic did it sound in my ears!

"No person will enter this apartment, save my faithful servant, Hubert; therefore——"

"I promised to enlighten the master, and not the servant. If you insist on this strange request, the door must be securely locked; there must be no chance of interruption."

"Oh, what a fuss," I thought, "about a mantle! Why *he* must be mad too! How can he cure me of an evil he has himself? Lock the door, forsooth, because he takes off his cloak! But I must humour him, I suppose, or he will find an excuse for breach of promise." As I thought this, I walked to the door, locked it, and, placing the key upon the table, merely said, "Now, signor, your promise?"

"Would it not be prudent, young gentleman," he observed, laying his finger on my sleeve, "that you should speak of your request,—that one that brought you hither, and which I should conceive of more *importance* than the satisfying an idle curiosity,—*would it not* be wiser of you to mention this *previously to* my taking off my cloak?"

"Oh, what importance he attaches to so trifling a thing!" thought I; "but, after all, the man is right; I had better attend to the most essential, nor was I wise to couple two requests together."

"Signor Marquis," said I, "have you any cure for insanity?"

"*I cured your father*," was the answer, "and this your mother knows. He in return did *me* a service; he presented me with—this excellent cloak."

I was more puzzled than ever; I had never before *heard* that my poor father had unsettled reason, but many circumstances made me now believe it. I fancied, too, that my youngest sister gave indications of the same disorder; she was growing melancholy and reserved. "Oh, heavens!" thought I, "there will be more work for this man to do; I had better invite him at once to England, and make him physician in ordinary to our family."

"I have an engagement at nine," said the stranger; "have you any other inquiries to make?"

"But if you *cured* my father, Signor Marquis," I observed, "how is it that I have inherited the disease? Should not the *cure* have eradicated it for ever from him and his posterity?"

"Is it not enough that I prevented the display of such a malady during his life? that I drove away the cloud that obscured his day, so that the sun of *reason shone brightly* on him until his death? *What had I to do* with future generations? with

a race of men then unborn? *I performed my contract*, and he was satisfied. Shall the son be more difficult to please than the father?"

I interrupted him, "Oh, mysterious man! canst thou not cure the *root* of this disease? stop its fatal progress? prevent the seed from partaking of the nature of the plant?"

"Young man!" solemnly returned the marquis, "was not thy first progenitor, the man who resided in Paradise, *mad*—essentially mad? and has not his disease been carried on, in spite of all physicians, down, down to the present hour? It is woven into man's very nature; the warp and woof of which he is composed. I can check its open manifestation in a single individual; but the evil will only be dammed up during his time, to give it an increased impetus and power to those who follow him. Art thou not an instance of this fact? Hast thou not been madder than thy father?"

I groaned aloud. I remembered my own wild delusions, my sudden bursts of passion. I even began to think that madness ruled me at that very hour; that all I saw and heard was the coinage of a distempered brain.

At length I said, dejectedly, unknowing that I spoke aloud, "Then I must never marry; my children will become worse than myself. Farewell, *then*——"

"*Or rather*," interrupted the cloaked stranger,

"farewell to human marriages altogether, if those who marry must be free from madness. Why, 'tis the very sign they are so, their wishing to rivet fetters on themselves; but no matter. What have I to do with all the freaks and frenzied institutions of such a set of drivelling idiots?"

"Art thou not a man?"

"Thou shalt judge for thyself, thou insect of an hour!" and he unclasped his cloak, and stood erect before me. Coiled around him like a large boa-constrictor, reaching to his very throat—— But I sicken as I write! The remembrance of that moment, how shall it be effaced? Time deadens thousands of recollections, but has never weakened the impression made upon me at that appalling moment!

The immense mass that wound its lengthy fibres round him, like a cable of a ship, now became sensibly animated by life! I beheld it move, and writhe, and unfold itself! I heard its extremity drop upon the floor! I saw it extend itself, and creep along! More—more still descended; fewer coils were round him! He turned himself to facilitate its descent; and, when the enormous whole encircled him, still undulating on the ground, that being looked towards me with one of those smiles that Satan might be supposed to use.

"Behold!" said he, pointing to the dark undulation on the floor, "*behold the reason* why I wear a *cloak!*"

Insensibility closed up my senses. I could behold no more. When I recovered I was alone. The stranger had departed, leaving the door ajar; but he had written on a slip of paper, and placed it just before me, these words:

"The remedy I bestowed upon the father, for *his* sake I will give unto the son. *Three notches of the devil's tail* will perfectly restore you; but it must be cut off by the hand of *the purest person that you know on earth. It will grow again!*"

* * * * *

I hastily caught up this paper on hearing the step of my attendant, and placed it in my bosom. I think he saw the action, for he looked mournfully on me, and shook his head. I told him I was ready to set off instantly for Rome: his simple answer was,

"I wish we had remained there!"

"And *why*, Hubert?"

"You are pale as a sheeted corpse, and the boards of the floor are *singed*, yet there has been no fire in the room!"

I looked where he pointed; and, in a serpentine form, I beheld the traces of that enormous tail I had seen fall from the body of the cloaked stranger, coiled round him as an immense serpent twines itself around a tree. I shuddered at the sight. I felt *my* brain working; yet I wrestled with the spirit of *darkness* within. I tried to persuade myself that *I had been* overtaken only by a dream; that my

whole acquaintance with the pretended marquis was nothing but an illusion, a vision of the imagination, an optic delusion, an hallucination of an excited state of mind; but it would not do. There were the dark and calcined marks, which it was my duty to account for to my host, who cared very little how they were occasioned, so as he received an ample sum to have the boards removed, and others in their place.

Our accounts were soon arranged, and I returned to my anxious family; but my disorder was increasing hourly. The wildest imaginations haunted and perplexed me. My beloved mother looked at me with tears swimming in her eyes. My eldest sister strove, by a hundred stratagems, to dispel the gloom that arose amongst us all. Emily sat, absorbed in her own melancholy thoughts, a fellow-sufferer, I fancied, with myself. My lovely, innocent, affectionate cousin held my fevered hand in one of hers, and imploringly asked me to be tranquil; said she would sing to me if I would try to sleep. I felt the gentle charm, and gave myself up to it. I laid myself upon the sofa; and she, whose name I cannot utter, sitting on a low stool by my side, sought to soothe me with her voice.

THE SONG OF ——.

"Come from heaven, soft balmy Sleep,
Since thou art an angel there!
Come, and watch around him keep—
Watch that I with thee will share.

"Strew thy poppies o'er his head,
Calm the fever of his mind;
All thy healing virtues shed,
That he may composure find!"

"O God!" I cried, jumping up; "and must I never call this angel mine? Better to die at once, or lose all consciousness of what a wretch I am!"

"Hush, my dearest cousin! I have invoked an angel from the skies to visit you; drive her not away by ill-timed violence. Here, let me hold your hand;" and she began again to murmur in a low tone,

"Strew thy poppies o'er his head,
Calm the fever of his mind;"

and so I fell asleep.

When I awoke, my gentle cousin (more constant than my heavenly visitant, Sleep) was still seated by my side; all the rest were gone; candles burned on the table—it was midnight; I had slept for hours, she yet retained my hand. I looked at her, and burst into tears.

"We are alone, Theodore," said my beloved; "tell me, I beseech you, what is labouring on your mind. You have spoken strange things during your sleep. You have declared that I had the power to restore you; can I do this? Theodore, be candid! Were it to cost my life, I would gladly lay it down *to be of benefit* to you."

I could not answer her; but I clasped my arms

round that pure angelic form, and wept like an infant on her bosom.

"Can I do you service, Theodore? You deny not what your lips murmured in sleep."

"You can restore my reason, for you are the purest person that I know on earth."

"By what means? But, alas! you are wandering still; this is one of your delusions! Would that it were in my power to heal thy mind, my dearest cousin!"

"In this, my heart's treasure, I am at least perfectly sane. *You have the power to cure me.*"

"Tell me the means."

I related to —— the whole of my adventures at Naples. I hid nothing from her excepting that our children might be infected with the same disease. Many reasons prevented my naming this. She was too delicate for me to allude to such a circumstance; I was willing to run all hazards of my posterity inheriting so dreadful a disease. My father had done as I intended to do; and the remedy was as open to *my* offspring as to myself, for had not the cloaked stranger told me that "the tail would grow again?" Even without such growth, had it not notches enough for a whole line of my posterity, supposing them all in want of such a restorative?

There was a pause of a full minute ere she spoke; her *cheek was blanched*, and her hand trembled in *mine.*

"Theodore, I know not what to think, whether from madness or from sanity comes your wondrous tale; but I will go through it, come what may. I will see this being; and, should he be indeed the author of all evil, out of evil shall come good, for I have courage, for your dear sake, to take from him the horrid remedy; but speak not of it, even to your mother or your sisters. Ah, poor Emily! she too may need such help! I will procure enough for her also."

Everything was arranged. I was in that state that all I demanded was granted to me, for they feared to oppose my wishes. I entered the travelling carriage with my beautiful betrothed.

We had no attendants. We drove to the same hotel in which I had been before. We were shown into the same room; but the marks upon the floor were gone,—new boards were there. We ordered dinner *for three;* and I went out in search of the cloaked stranger.

It may seem strange that those who seek the devil should seek in vain; but what is so perverse as the Origin of Evil?

Towards the close of day I, however, brought him in, as lofty, proud-looking, and handsome as ever; his features bore the stamp of angelic beauty; but, alas! the expression was—*the fallen angel.* He saluted with much politeness, nay, even kindness, *my lovely friend*; and we entered at once upon the *business.*

When he heard *who* was to perform the operation he absolutely turned pale, and made a thousand objections. Some other person might be found; but I, fool that I was! overruled them all, and insisted on it, that she was the purest person that I knew on earth.

He then endeavoured to intimidate her; but she was resolute, though her lip quivered. We had a long argument about it, and most subtle was his reasoning. Yet he seemed as if he had no power absolutely to refuse. Reluctantly he drew from a secret pocket in his cloak a small steel hatchet, with many figures inscribed upon it. She received it at his hands; but I observed a fixedness in her beautiful eyes, and a rigidity about her mouth that I did not like; still she grasped the shining instrument, and hesitated not. But when his cloak fell off, O what a look of horror did those dear eyes assume!

Slowly descended the voluminous appendage; its extreme end fell on the chair on which he had been sitting. She flew like lightning thither, raised the glittering tool, marked the precise spot, and severed at a blow "three notches of the devil's tail!"

"Take—take your remedy, dear Theodore!" she whispered, "for I cannot touch it."

I stooped, and took the severed quivering part, *but could not hold it for its heat*; so thrust it into *my coat-pocket; I* then turned to congratulate my

deliverer, *but she was a lifeless corpse at my feet;* and the stranger had vanished, I knew not and I cared not whither.

How often have I called on madness, or on death, to take from me the memory of her loss! Neither would come! I have had no return of my malady, but I have experienced anguish fourfold! The only benefit derived has been that my sister Emily has been totally cured by the specific that was so dearly purchased, for it proved efficacious in both cases.

Perchance it may prove useful for the future members of our family, should they be infected with this hereditary complaint; for myself, I shall never need it for my offspring, my affections are buried in the grave; but I have bequeathed it to my beloved sisters—with my hopes, more than my belief, that it may prove effective,—"*the three notches of the devil's tail!*"

LES POISSONS D'AVRIL.

BY FATHER PROUT.

REDDY O'DRYSCULL, SCHOOLMASTER, ETC., TO THE EDITOR.

WATER-GRASS-HILL, 20*th March*.

SIR,—In answer to your application for further scraps of the late P.P., and in reply to your just reproof of my remissness in forwarding, as agreed upon, the monthly supplies to your "Miscellany," I have only to plead as my "apology" the "fast of Lent," which in these parts is kept with such rigour as totally to dry up the genial moisture of the brain, and desiccate the καλα ρεεθρα of the fancy. In "justice to Ireland" I must add that, by the combined exertions of patriots and landlords, we are kept at the proper starving-point all the year round: a blissful state not likely to be disturbed by any provisions in the new Irish "poor law." My correspondence must necessarily be *jejune* like the season. I send you, however, an appropriate song, which our late *pastor used to chant* over his red-herring whenever *a friend from Cork* would drop in to partake of

such Lenten entertainment as his frugal kitchen could afford.

THE SIGNS OF THE ZODIAC.

A GASTRONOMICAL CHANT.

Sunt Aries, Taurus, Cancer, Leo, Scorpio, Virgo,
Libraque et Arcitenens, Gemini, Caper, Amphora, Pisces.

I.

Of a tavern the Sun every month takes "the run,"
And a dozen each year wait his wishes;
One month with old Prout he takes share of a trout,
And puts up at the sign of THE FISHES. ♓
'Tis an old-fashioned inn, but more quiet within
Than THE BULL ♉ or THE LION ♌—both boisterous;
And few would fain dwell at THE SCORPION ♏-hotel,
Or THE CRAB ♋. But this last is an oyster-house.

II.

At the sign of THE SCALES ♎ fuller measure prevails;
At THE RAM ♈ the repast may be richer!
Old Goëthe oft wrote at the sign of THE GOAT, ♑
Though at times he'd drop in at THE PITCHER; ♒
And those who have stayed at the sign of THE MAID, ♍
In desirable quarters have tarried;
While some for their sins must put up with THE TWINS, ♊
Having had the mishap to get married.

III.

But THE FISHES ♓ combine in one mystical sign
A moral right apt for the banquet;
And a practical hint, which I ne'er saw in print,
Yet a Rochefoucault maxim I rank it:
If a secret I'd hide, or a project confide,
To a comrade's good faith and devotion,
Oh! the friend whom I'd wish, though he *drank* like a *fish*,
Should be *mute* as the tribes of the ocean.

IRISH INVENTION.

BY P. M^cTEAGUE, ESQ.

HOW comes it, as we often hear it said, that we Irish people, living so near England,—*that* England which (*according to the map*) seems to be actually hugging Ireland; or (turned another way) carrying her on her back, as our honest women here so dearly love to carry their children,—how comes it, as people *fancy*, that we are not so inventive as our neighbours, or *nurses?* that we "*don't take after the mother;*" spin so little cotton; have such little specks of railroads; and don't yet build or furnish our steamers? These might be puzzling questions, and I believe frequently prove so to the uninitiated, particularly when we call to mind how *very* kind, and tender-hearted, and generous England has been to us, and what pains she has taken in our education! ("Bad manners to you, Larry, *where's your bow?*") But to us, learned as we are in such matters at least, not at all so; and proud and happy do I feel in having this *opportunity* of assuring my readers that I can most *agreeably* undeceive them; and if I don't convince *them that* Ireland *is* a country of invention, and deep

invention too; and that since the world began no people have existed half so full of invention *as* the Irish, I will give them leave to look as cross at me as they please when we meet again.

The only difference, then, between English and Irish inventions consists in the following points: that English inventions are merely mechanical, while Irish inventions are amusingly hyperbolical; and if in some respects exciting to risibility, yet disclosing in others a world of wonder, with an attendant *moon of instruction.*

To illustrate my argument as an Irishman, look at the spinning-jennies as they call them—was there ever such sameness? No variety; all as like one another as two pins. Now *we* could not bear *that.* The very idea of such shoals of things all turning the same way would bother us out of our senses. But if one could be made to go one way, and one another way, *that* might do; or if they would leave off having so manny Jennies altogether, and let some *Jemmie's* come among them, *that* might be better still. "By the powers! ther' 'ud be twisting and turning enough then!"

Also, "in regard to them steam-ships and rail-ways," we have heard all about *them* from the cattle-dealers and pig-drivers, and don't like them *at all.* Here 's a case of hardship.

"Terry Donohoe tuk twinty pigs all the way over *to Liverpool, and* hurted and damaged the' wor in

the big shtamer; for some av thim had the hair, and *schnouts*, an' tails burnt aff, by rason they 'ud be rubbing thimselves ag'in the shimmeny, which, though painted black (which desaved the pigs) was red-hot all the time. Well, as we were saying, Terry got what was left of his twinty pigs, and saw them safe put into a big box they carry them in to MANSHESSTHER, and that was on the 'thrain,' an' he taking a small glass of sperrets with a fr'ind, after all the salt water he had on the *say*, which brings on the 'druthe.'

"'Murder!' siz Terry, 'where's me pigs?' siz Terry.

"'Halfways to Manshessther be this,' siz a big red-nosed fellow, with his two hands stuck in his two breeches-pockets.

"'Will I catch thim?' says Terry.

"'To be sure you will, if you run quick enough,' siz the man wid the big nose, siz he.

"So aff Terry started at the top of his speed, and hadn't run five miles before he found all his pigs on the thrain, or the rails, or whatever they call them, cut into little bits, and the heads av thim *shmashed* so he couldn't tell one from another; and divil o' bit o' satisfaction ever he got from the 'boord of the commet'hee of directhurs,' only they tould him that sometimes, when the craturs are unruly, the wheels of the pig-boxes do come aff, and that whenever sich *a thing* happened, their rules made them cut the *pigs into soorsedges*."

After this plain, if not affecting recital, well might the pig-driver exclaim, "What soort of inventions are these, I wonder, that 'ud burn the hair, and tails, and 'shnouts' aff of a poor man's pigs, and then have them cut into bits and *soorsedges?*" Also, "What kind of justice from the 'boord of the commet'hee of directhurs?'"

And, we might add, what would our poor people be without their wit, their humour, and invention? Nothing! absolutely nothing but a half-starved, ignorant, and shivering race, in rags and tatters, possessing, in fact, nothing in their compositions to form a study, create an interest, or raise a smile.

But set their wits at work—their native, racy, unfathomable wits,—attend to the peculiar shrug of the shoulders, the deep twinkle of the eye, as Paddy draws "at sight" upon the overflowing stores of his invention; and first most solemnly declaring that "he would scorn to tell his honour a lie," or "that the devil a word of lie was in it," he will give you at a moment's warning a string of pure inventions not to be rivalled or surpassed by all the romancers in the world.

The most common occurrence upon which poor Paddy is questioned will be ingeniously turned, or coaxed, or twisted into numerous different versions, just as he thinks he can most successfully gratify the *person he is addressing*, most efficiently serve *his own purposes, or* tickle and amuse any bystander.

Should, however, his ready eye detect either suspicion or displeasure, straightway, and without the slightest embarrassment, he will recompose his narrative, and will just as readily swallow all he had previously said as a well-cooked potato.

Of course most people, and you in particular who are expecting nothing else, see through this flimsy kind of scheming at once; but the curiosity of the case lies in this—that Paddy himself is equally aware of probable detection; and yet, from some unaccountable desire to bother, flatter, or humbug you, cannot for the soul of him desist.

However you may regret the want of truth and principle, such scenes as these are frequently amusing. Paddy forces you to laugh at some ridiculous tale or conceit, which has little or no foundation, and all the while is but too frequently endeavouring to divert your attention from some deeper-laid scheme of roguery, such as I have before endeavoured to represent in the history of Watty Flaherty.

To a certain extent I had a kind or a "soort" of a Watty Flaherty myself in my service—I don't think he humbugged quite so much, but he did his best. It was not for want of a right good will that way. He was a willing, active, handy lad; a good groom, passably honest, and one who, I never *doubted* (having had a trial of his readiness that *way*), *would* have risked his life in defending mine.

His name was Tom Dillon. Unfortunately, however, I could rarely depend upon one word he said. He was also an inveterate smoker; and, having afterwards taken to the "dhrop"—though happy am I to do him this justice, he has since abjured it, with more than two millions of his countrymen—I was obliged to "dhrop" him. His inventions were at times rather amusing, and his lies were told with gratuitous perseverance. As for instance.

Sitting in the kitchen one cold, rainy day, close to the fire, smoking away at his "dudheen," in came an old beggar-man, one of those mendicants who stroll through the country, living it is hard exactly to say how, and nobody knows where; who deal in news, tales, jokes, and gossip; frequently, where found palatable, in scandal; welcome to the poor, and often to the richer classes, from whom odd shillings and sixpences are skilfully extracted, or garments and linen (invariably sold for whiskey); who get dinners and beds almost everywhere, often supporting, and with consummate art, the character of a "natural." Such a man was "Shauneen Baun;" and, if one of your Watts or Arkwrights of the present day were asked how this beggar contrived to keep such a multitudinous assemblage of rags on his back, each piece in its proper place, probably the greatest projector of our age would resign the *palm of invention to* Shauneen Baun. My son had *gone into the kitchen* for his gun, and was standing

at the door of the closet; but hearing from Tom Dillon that Shauneen Baun was close at hand, he had just time to sit down behind some linen, when the scene commenced, and fortunately had a good view of Shauneen Baun through the division of a pair of sheets, though Shauneen Baun could not see him,—a circumstance which, doubtless, saved his pocket, while it has added to our stock of anecdote. The *onus*, therefore, was on Tom Dillon; nor did he fail to make the most of such an opportunity for the display of his inventive powers before the "young masther."

Enter SHAUNEEN BAUN.—"God save ye, Tom Dillon!"

TOM.—Welcome, Shauneen! Come in, man, I 'm all alone. Sit down, and take an air of the fire.

Shauneen looked at the fire, sat down, and warmed himself. (Tom had concealed his pipe, but Shauneen had smelt the tobacco.) "Musha Tom, but this fire is a fine thing—so it is, and the *ould bones* aching with the cowld and rumatiz." (After a fidget,) "They tell me the *tibbachy* failed entirely in *Amiricah* this year. Oh, blur-an'-'ouns! what 'll we do? Have *you* any tibbachy, Tom? Myself gev the lasht iv it I had away."

"I have," said Tom.

"Where? Show me id, till I put it in my pipe."

TOM.—I have it here, in the heel of my fisht.

SHAUNEEN.—Show me yer hand.

TOM.—Hould your own.

So Shauneen held his hand, while Tom cut up the tobacco with his knife (which is the custom among us). Shauneen quietly put all Tom had cut into his own pocket, and then, handing him his pipe, said, "Here, Tom, now here 's this pipe, and fill it *so*, as the tibbachy is so plinty wid you."

So Tom did; and having lit it as usual, handed it to Shauneen, who puffed away.

Now, then, commenced the tug of war; curiosity, food for gossip, on the side of the beggar; glorious humbug, lying, and invention, on the other.

SHAUNEEN (looking up at the ceiling, and down at the fire).—Yarrah, Tom Dillon, this is a warm, snug house; but whisper, isn't Mr. M'Teague a quare soort o' man to have suich a small little house and place here, an' he going in his carr'ge, and his son and himself shtuck up ag'in one another in it *wedin*, an' he keepin' another horse along with that ag'in, and dinin' with the quality intirely, so they are? Does he keep any other servant here with yersilf?

TOM DILLON. — Whisha! God help your ould head, now, Shauneen, for what you said. Small place, indeed! Yarrah! that man has twinty places! This, wher' y' are now, is only by way of a shootin'-box. He has this juist whin it plases him to come and knock down a *patteridge*, or coax the *throut* out of the *loch beyant.*

SHAUNEEN.—The Lord save us! Is it twinty

places, Tom, in airnest, and servants in all o' thim?

TOM.—Divil a lie in it, and myself believes it is twinty-three he has in all, only he only tuk me to *fifteen*. There 's servants in all o' thim, mostly on boord-wages, and he keeps me here on boord-wages; an' a little weeshy woman tidying the bed-chambers above. You know her very well, Shaun, by rason she 's a bit of a nun. She cooks his *throut* illegant, an' his game; an' has the fresh eggs and butter, and hot rowls, and griddle cakes, an' a furrin thing tossed up in the fryin'-pan, made of the yolks of maybe siventy eggs at a time—and they call this an *alminack*—for himself and the young masther; an' a couple of fine horses I 've to mind, an' a little work in the gardin, and ride up and down the counthry tin miles round with arrants and letthers, and big an' little parshils. Sure, when he 's here, man alive, he has more letthers, and notes, and missages than Dan O'Connell would in the "sason of parlimint"—so he has.

SHAUNEEN.—Glory be to God! he must be a great man intirely; but, hould! what diz he give *you*, Tom?

TOM.—Yeh! then not so much, indeed, by rason I 'm young yit. Only eight-an'-sixpence a week myself gets, and seven shillings the cook. But then, *you see*, Shauneen, when himsilf 's at home, there 's *wine, and* cider, and Guinness' porter running about.

the house in all derichtions, an' he always brings a rowl of tibbachy for the neighbours; but he won't let a dhrop of whiskey inside the dure.

SHAUN.—Ow! by the laws that 's illegant, boord-wages and all! Oh! he must be a grand man, and a raal gintleman. I wisht he was to the fore this minuet.

TOM.—Begor! if he was he 'd give you a shillin', an' yer dinner, an' a glass of porter to settle the *pt'shaties*, an' then he 'd give you a bran new pipe, and a great bit of tibbachy, and a good bed to lie on at anyhow.

SHAUN.—Yarrah! now, Tom, where is he this way?

TOM.—Where he is? I thought everybody knew *that*. He 's at the Curragh o' Kildare this day with the Lord Lefft'nant, and all the great men of Ireland. He has three horses *inthir'd* to run, and one is to go to him from Limerick, and whin they 've ran in the Curragh, they 're to go to Cork. He has five stable-boys an' a head-groom always mindin' thim, an' he gives the groom forty guineas a year—an' what do you say to him?—but won't let man or boy belonging to him wear a livery. Don't ye see myself has a frieze coat an? He and the young masther always wears the County Clare frieze, and I 'll engage they 're not a-shy or ashamed to put it an.

SHAUN.—Bilug a bowns! Is that thrue? and *what soort is the son?*

Now was the moment of Tom's triumph, as his great object was to invent something to tickle *him*.

TOM.—By gad! all that 's good. He 's a *grand* young gin-tel-man, and very fond of the spoort—huntin', and fishin', and shootin', and divarshons entirely.

SHAUN.—And is he out wid the father?

TOM.—Not at all. He 's in Cork, this ways, gettin' reddy for the races, and inthirin' horses. People all siz he 's more knowener than the masther himsilf, and makes the money fly like shot out of a gun. Divil take the bit o' me, but 'ud go through fire and wather for his bidden. Indeed, we had some words *wanse*, but he didn't turn me aff, nor *never will*, plase God!

SHAUN.—*That I may be in heaven sittin' upon a binch*, but I 'd like to be in yer place, Tom, if I was young ag'in. Here 's yer pipe. I must be aff. I 've to go tin miles to a gintleman that 's promised me an ould coat, and maybe I 'll get a shillin' too. —Exit.

However successful Tom Dillon might be considered in the line of invention, yet in some respects I think his glory was dimmed by a quiet-looking old fellow, called Tim Curtin, who lived with a much-respected neighbour of mine, Mr. Good. Still there *was this* striking difference between the two: my *servant's* wits were diffuse and voluminous, while

Tim's, on the contrary, were sententious and concentrated.

Mr. Good, who is one of the kindest masters living, takes great pride in a beautiful lawn and pleasure-ground round his mansion at Derg View, shut in by thriving plantations, with walks round them, prettily laid out.

After his crop of hay had been secured and stacked, my friend, like a first-rate agriculturist, as he is admitted to be, ordered this land to be dressed *secundum artem*, and soon his ground was covered with valuable manure, deposited in heaps, which Tim had orders to spread without delay. Leaving home for a few weeks, what was Mr. Good's surprise on returning to find each heap in its first position, and Tim, who evidently expected what was to follow, leaning upon his shovel, looking at them.

Mr. Good.—Why, Tim, what *have* you been about all this time? Are you not ashamed of yourself? Didn't I tell you to spread this manure out immediately, when it would have done great good to the land? and here, you lazy scoundrel! you have left these heaps to eat away, and rot, and damage the grass under them.

Tim.—Why, your honor, I 've done my best, and worked hard every day, and couldn't do more (pointing to two large heaps). Does yer honor see *them two hapes yander?*

Mr. Good.—To be sure I do; and what of that?

TIM.—Well, sir, them two hapes,—as sure as I 'm standing spaking now to yer honor—— (A pause.)

MR. GOOD.—Come, now, no nonsense.

TIM.—Whisht, sir, for God's sake! Them two hapes—(mysteriously)—them two very hapes, yer honor, I spread out with my own shovel here this blessed mornin'; *and however they coine together ag'in!*

Having, as it were, the spade in our hands, the following scene in a potato field, not far from my house, may be here related as nearly as possible as it took place.

Potato digging (as now and then rather pompously set forth in *our* newspapers) is sometimes said to be performed gratuitously, in token of admiration of some *great little* man's character, many points of which very character the people, said to be thus *adoring* it, but too frequently in their hearts despise.

The numbers thus engaged are, of course, proportioned to the extent of the ground to be dug. For instance, for the work of digging an Irish acre of potatoes (more than one-third larger than an English acre, forty Irish acres making sixty-five English)—for this acre to dig, gather up, and pit the crop (in one day), as many as forty men and ten women and children will often be collected. These *people, however*, whether they really love the person *for whom* they are employed or not (a very hard

question), will expect either their regular wages (varying from tenpence to fifteenpence per day, exclusive of allowance), or a plentiful repast of meat, drink, and vegetables; and before teetotalism came into vogue, each throat was actually aching for whiskey.

One lovely morning last October I had as gay and merry a set as could well be collected anywhere. There were some fine active young men, some pretty girls, too, and two or three old stagers whom I knew, and whose yarns I had heard before. I had twenty men altogether, quite sufficient for my small piece of potato-ground, one man to each ridge; and as I found them talking, which is ever the case, so I left them talking and laughing too, all hands; and yet, with all this laughing and talking, I could not but admire the regularity and dexterity of the work. One man on the right leads the rest; he is in advance a little; and so they all follow, as the military men have it, in *échelon*, forming a regularly inclined line, which seldom varies. There I found them digging away, and turning up the beautiful *murphies* (a word, by the by, unknown here. It appears to me as if they meant to call them "praties;" but this they cannot do, as they slip over the "r," and pronounce them "pt'shaties"). Each man was *plying his long*-handled spade, perfectly *erect at his work*, — *not* stooping down toit, *as the English clodpoles* do, — and the girls and

little children were following, some picking up others filling a large basket, which one of the men took it in regular turn with the rest to carry to the pit.

And maybe there wasn't the "raal fun going an. It does one's very heart good to see these poo people enjoying themselves together, leaving al their cares and sorrows, as they do the "pt'shaties, behind them!

I am afraid I lost something superexcellent, a they were all roaring out at a sally of wit; and even Paddy Kinnaan himself, an old fellow who evidentl laughs with difficulty, as if his cheeks would crac in the operation,—even Paddy's gravity was upset,— he was laughing, though seemingly in pain by doin so. All the others' "potato traps" were widel enough distended.

There was Billy Carmody leading the entir operation, an oldish stager, but a capital hand at th work, and a still better one at a piece of invention next to him, however, was a real sly fellow, Jemm Rooney, who was often more than a match for Billy after him another of the same "soort," Rod Scanlan; and then what one may call a *butt*, Mick Culligan, who was a little deaf, or pretended to b so (the latter most probably, as these men rea immense advantages in the way of question an answer), and thus, when a good thing was said, th *joke* was, "Did you hear that, Micky?"

"God bless ye, boys!" I said.

"Welcome, sir."

"What sort of a crop do ye call this?"

"Oh, illegant, yer honor. Great pt'shaties entirely. We never seen the likes, indeed, yer honor."

"Oh, it 's no wonder, with the *manure* they got!" said one.

"Sure was not the ridges full av it?" said another; and so passed on the praises of my crop all down the line, like a *feu de joie*.

"Well, boys, I 'm glad to see you all so well and hearty, and none of you drinking whiskey."

Rody.—In troth, yer honor, it 's a good thing to be done with it, an' we 're all the better. I was wanst and I never could get enough of it, and now I 'd rather take the ditch wather.

"I assure you, my friends, you could not tell me anything I am prouder to hear; and I am also as proud to add, that I have followed your example, and have left off the usual tumbler after dinner, and so, it is my firm belief, will every gentleman in this neighbourhood. And I can assure you I never felt myself better in my life, and therefore now believe that whiskey is neither conducive to health nor strength, and certainly not either to peace of mind or body."

Omnes.—Oh, long life to yer honor; that 's thrue *indeed!*

BILLY CARMODY.—An' sure, yer honor, we 've th
te-bacch-y left us!

"You have, Billy," I replied; "and I don'
begrudge it you, knowing well, though not myself
smoker, what comfort the old pipe gives you in you
houses, especially when you come in wet and tired
and therefore, though I should only insult you b
offering whiskey (not a drop of which will enter m
house again), yet I hope you will find plenty to ea
and drink, and plenty of tobacco, and each of you
new pipe, when the work is done."

OMNES.—Oh, then, that yer honor may *encrase*
and that we may dig yer honor's pt'shaties agin an
agin!

All this was a sort of "overture." Now begai
the entertainment.

BILLY CARMODY.—Oh, that whiskey war *tu'rrbl*
stuff, yer honor! Would yer honor believe what i
did one day to myself, and two or three more av us
that went into Dunny Gorman's house there *beyant*.
An' if we did, we had some *bish'ness* to settle; an
we called for a half-pint, and we filled out a glas
an' began settling the *bish'ness*, an' we all heard
crack on the table, an' thin the glass *flewn*, and s
begor, we lost the whiskey! "Oh, ho, ho! what'
this, boys?" siz myself. "Biddy," siz I to th
landlady, "come till you see what yer whiskey don
to this glass," siz I. An' she tuk up the pieces, an
siz she, "This is all wid the 'denth' of the 'strin'

of the liquor, boys," siz she. An' so she went to her closet, and brought out a fine *shtrong* thick owld glass, an' hirsilf fillt it for us to make up the loss; and siz she, "Here, now," siz she, and held it up close at Ned Halloran's nose, "shmell to that now," siz she; an' if she did, that very minnet aff went the ould glass, and cut Ned's nose a'most in two! Yarrah! what can they put into the whiskey that 'll make it go aff that way, *like sticks a breaking?*

"Did you hear that, Micky?" said one.

"*Vith'ral*," said Micky. "Vith'ral, I tell ye!"

James Rooney was not the man to listen to this marvellous narration without a reply.

"I 'll wager a hat full of sixpences ould Mick is right. Mysilf has seen upwards of twinty glasses broke that same way, and the painted tables *friz'shling* up whin the sperret was spilt an them. Indeed, I was toult this often enough! But sure, boys, that 's nothin' to what Patsy Mungavan, an' mysilf, an' another boy seen with our own eyes at Scariff. We wor there together on a Sunday to get mass; and after that we went to Mat Tracy's, him that keeps the shop an' public-house near the market; an' Mat had tin *pwinchins* o' raal Dublin whishkey within in his yard, which is an the *shlope* av the hill over the river; and he call't me in to help him rowling in the *pwinchins under* cover. An' what d'ye think *I seen him do, boys,* when he thought I was clane *gone? but I was only* slipped behint the dure.

Well, thin, he puts his hand into his pocket, and pulls out a bottle, you see; and thin he tuk the corks out of the pwinchins, an' he *dhropt* two or three *dhrops* into them, taking them in turn."

RODY.—Micky! do you hear that?

MICKY.—Every word. That was vith'ral!

ROONEY (continuing).—Maybe so, indeed. But only think, boys! whin he came to the very last *pwinchin*, his hand began to shake, and the bottle shlipped, and ever so much, but meself does not know how much, went in, an' it began to froth like a mad bull. "Oh, murd'her!" siz Mat, "I'm ruined!" siz he. "What'll I do?" siz he. "Here, James Rooney, run to me for the bare life!" siz he, an' he screechin', "you, an' all the boys at wanst!" siz he. And with that, before there was time to say another word, the pwinchin beginn'd to bile, an' *shtart*, an' shake itsilf; an', the Lord save us! sarra one av it but ruz up four feet aff of the ground o' one lep, and kep' lepping down the side of the yard, and Mat bawlin' at the top of his voice to the boys to come help him! "Come, will ye, boys, and saze hould of that infernal pwinchin, an' help me to keep it *quite*," siz he, "or I'll be ruined!" siz he; "an' it's making for the river, an' it'll throw itself in, it's so hot and mad," siz he. An' so we had all to do our best, av coorse, and by little an' *little* each man got a hoult of the rim, an' it tuk *FIVE* strong able boys to steddy it, and hould it, an'

it shtruggling for the wather all the time, until Mat tuk the head out and cooled it.

A tremendous yell of delight followed this glorious story. I now looked to Billy Carmody, full of hope that he would not yield the triumph of invention without another *round*. Nor was I disappointed. It came out gradually in this way.

"Well," said Billy, digging away, and turning out the glories of Ireland, the lovely CUPS!—"well, to be sure, whiskey's a turr'ble thing; and it's mysilf prays for Father Matchew every night, that tuk the *shmell* av it out of my nose. I was wanst, an' I went t' Ennis, with a car load o' *whate*, a' Tom Ronnels bought the load; an' if he did, he call't me into his room, an' siz he, 'Bill,' siz he, 'you're fond of a dhrop of the good stuff,' siz he, 'an' I have it here'll shute you,' siz he. Well, meself was cowld wid standin' all day in the market, and so siz I, 'Wid all my heart, Tom,' siz I; an' I hadn't tashted a dhrop all day. So he wint straight over to his *priss*, and filt me out a rasonable glass. 'Now, Bill,' siz he, 'bolus *that*,' si he, 'for that's THRUBBLE DISHTILL'D! An' whisper,' siz he, 'don't tashte another dhrop to-day,' siz he; 'for if you do, them *Peelers* won't let you go out of the town,' siz he, 'but'll put you in the barrack-hole,' siz he. Well, sure enough, I dhrank it every dhrop, and, by the laws! it was *illegant. He ped me my* money, an' I walked out, *and so towards home fair* an' asy. I lived at that

time about three miles aff; an' whin I got about a mile, I thought the road got *narrarer* and *narrarer*, and thin what was left of the road got up o' top av the walls, an' riz up over the *threes*, and pulled the *threes* upside down over me; and thin my two eyes turned clane back in my head, and wisha! not one o' me but fell an the flat o' me back, until some of the neighbors *ruz* me, an' carr'd me home wid thimsilves on a car!"

The story was pretty good, and tolerably well applauded; yet methought the welkin did not ring *quite* so much as before, and Bill evidently thought so too. His wits, therefore, were still at work, and, with an ardent desire to beat James all hollow, he after a little time proceeded:—

"Well, them 's illegant pt'shaties! The cups is like sods o' turf risin' up out of the ground, an' aiqual to the goold! There 's a big one! James, what does that one weigh?"

"Bedad, Billy, I think nigh hand a pound, at any rate."

BILLY.—'Bout a pound, is it? That 's good weight, to be sure, for *this side o' the counthry*, to be in a pt'shatie. (A pause.) Well, well; but what is it, after all, to the one in a garden of my own, near Gort? an' when I *sowld* the rest, I tuk that be itsilf, an' the man at the *shckales* asked me, "What *was it* at all that I had under my arm; an' was it a *spare head* I had for my two shoulders, to put an

when my own head might be broke in two?" So I tould him it was a pt'shatie. "T'under and turf!" siz he; "hand it over here," siz he, "till I *luk* at it," siz he. So he put it into the *shckales*, and weighed it, an' over sixty people lookin' *an.* An' what d'ye think it weighed? Musha, be this crass, it weighed fourteen pounds an' *a dhraw down* in the shckale! "That's fourteen pound," siz the man, siz he; and he *shtuck* a great big skiver entirely in through it, and *shtuck* it up on the shckales; and Lord Gort, and her ladyship, and young Mr. Vereker, an' all the quality came to luk at it; and indeed it would surprise ye! (Great applause.)

Now, then, for James.

JAMES.—Oijeh! what 's that? What a little thing that was over at my own place at Cooleshamarogue! I 'll tell ye all about it. There was an ould well in the garden, an' if there was, it never had any wather in it in my time, or my father's before me. But if it hadn't, it got full of turf mowld, an' ould dung, an' sawdusht, and such-like things that gathered in it. An' if there did, in rowling some rubbidge into it, there was some *pashnup* seeds carried into it, and one of the seeds *grewn* in the hole, an' we all let it alone to grow an as it liked. An' the mowld bein' very rich an' good, it deepened in the ground, and kep' there, growing *bigger and bigger for* five years. An' the branches *spread out, an' got* big intirely, all the same as the

boughs av a *three!* An' we gathered a crop of seeds aff iv it every year, and soult them for a shilling an ounce to the neighbours. Well, one day the masther himsilf kem, and "What 's this?" siz he. —"That 's the big owld *pashnup*, yer honor," siz I.—"What pashnup?" siz he.—"That 's the pashnup, sir," siz I, "that 's been down an' growing there five years last March, an' hasn't done growing yit," siz I.—"Well, *rise* it up," siz he. "I 'll not have it growing here any longer," siz he; "an' it 's wather, an' not parshnups, I want in this well," siz he; "an' it 'll bursht the well," siz he. So six or seven of us gathered around it, but dickins one bit av us could move it! An' so we called the neighbours, and got *fifteen men*, an' pult it up *holus bolus*. An' we were *three hours* risin' it; an' the root av it measured *twinty-one feet*, and the body *jist the size of the well round*,—the Lord be praised! But, av coorse, it 'ud have *grewn* twenty-one more, *only for the hard bottom it came agin.*

I must leave the reader to determine the *palmam qui meruit*, only observing that, if vociferation is a good criterion, I think James, upon the whole, came off victor in the game of invention.

But now indeed a scene occurred, which all at once altered the face of things, broke the *boasted* line of my rifle corps, put the field into *unexpected* confusion, and in one moment caused

the *mêlée* of every man, woman, child, and spade, and also as suddenly roused at least a dozen dogs of various degrees.

A rat had been ousted from its hole! The rat was a goodly rat, whiskered as a dragoon, fierce, combative, nimble, quite too sagacious and active for his too numerous and disorganised foes. He ran, he jumped, he dodged, and hid by turns, while his pursuers were tumbling over one another. Even the dogs were so completely bothered, they knew not what to do,—scarcely how to bark!

"Hurr-r-r-s-s-s!"—"Hulla, hulla, hull-l-l-s-s-s!" —"Hurr-sh!"—"Hould him, hould him, Nero!" —"Saze him, Bell!"—Now, Terry 'll have him!" —"Hurr, hurr, Captain! Captain has him!" But poor Captain, instead of the *rat*, got a wipe over the ear with the edge of a spade.

"Yarrah! Micky, turn him, can't ye?"

"Musha! Tom, why didn't *you* turn him?"

"Sure I run up purty smart, but he made aff up the shore."

"Well, well, that was the greatest rot ever I seen! Ned, did you ever see such a *bigger one?* It was all as one as a *cat!*"

A girl (and a very pretty one, too) to a young fellow, tauntingly,—"Ah, Johnny, why didn't you *catch him?*"

"*Sure, how 'ud I,* when he hid away from me in

the furrow, as yerself does *behind the turf stack*, and me looking for you?"

"Ayeh! you're welcome to your jokes. The furrer, indeed! It must be *that the weeds dazzled ye.*"

"Whisper now, asthorough. It was your own self, maybe, was dazzling me all the time."

After this gallant sally, which I thought beat rat-hunting all hollow, I followed the rat's example, and stole away, wondering whether I should be able to remember all these INVENTIONS. I am, indeed, doubtful whether I have done them justice; but, gentle reader, if you are amused I am rewarded.

SCENES IN THE LIFE OF A GAMBLER.

"Lasciate ogni speranza voi ch' entrate."

PARIS!—there was once a magic in the name—a music in the sound. "Paris!" how often said I to myself when in another quarter of the globe, "yes, I will one day visit thee—will revive the memory of the great events of which thou hast been the arena — thy Fronde — the League —the Revolution—the Cent Jours—the history of thy chivalrous François — thy noble-minded Henri—the Grand Monarque—the witty and profligate Regent—thy unfortunate Louis, and still more pitiable Empereur;—and then the Gallery of the Louvre—the Museum of the Luxembourg—Versailles—St. Cloud—the Tuileries!" My dream was about to be realised.

I was then in my twenty-fifth year. I had health —a sufficiency of the goods of fortune to purchase the enjoyment of the moderate pleasures of life. My person and manners were agreeable; my acquirements greater than those of most of my college *contemporaries; and* the fine arts were "my passion *and my enjoyment.*" All these advantages, with a

pardonable egotism, I had been canvassing during my solitary journey (solitary? no, my mind was occupied with the most enchanting reveries—the most intoxicating visions), from which I was only awakened at the barrier of Montmartre. How my heart beat with delight as, from the eminence that overlooks the city, I beheld its spires, and domes, and houses, huddled in the vaporous gloom of an evening in May! The day had been a glorious one; the air breathed balm. My *calèche* was open; and four posters whirled me rapidly through the Boulevards, and entered the gateway of the Hôtel des Princes in the Rue Richelieu. This street was, as all who are acquainted with it know, the centre and focus of the fashion,—the life and motion of Paris, and of the foreigners who then flocked to it from all parts of Europe (for it was the third year of the Restoration), and had caught some of the volatile spirit of its mercurial people.

Times and dynasties change. Politics, that many-headed monster, now reigns supreme. Instead of the goddess Pleasure;—at whose shrine all sacrificed, —they have set up the Gorgon of parties. The army is no *état*—the church is no *état*. It is become a city of national guards—reviewed by a king, with his three sons,—a family marked for assassination. There is no court, no *ancienne noblesse* — every-*where* distress and misery, hate and calumny, perse-*cution* and imprisonment, ruin, the grippe, and

bankruptcy. Such is a picture of the Paris of 1837.

But I was in the Rue Richelieu—the great artery of the life's blood of Paris. From it, as from a floodgate, rushed along in conflicting eddies, sweeping like a torrent, a crowd in quest of pleasure. Some were hurrying to the gaming-houses; some *aux Italiens*, to the Ambigu, or the Variétés, and the different theatres; others to the Palais Royal, which in its magic circle comprehends all that vice or luxury can invent to seduce the imagination or gratify the sense; then to Tortoni's, or the innumerable cafés, there to enjoy the *al fresco* of the Boulevards Italiens seated under the trees, or to mingle with the multitude, chatting, laughing, or whispering in delighted ears under the well-lighted avenue of elms that had just put forth their young leaves. I made one of the throng, and would that *Armida* Paris had had no worse enchantments—no more seductive pleasures. Alas! what have I now to do with them? They have lost their charm. My hair is grey,—my heart is withered!

But I anticipate.

What do the phrenologists mean by not having assigned to their chart of the skull a place for play? Gall, during his long practice in Paris, might surely have discovered it; for, of all people, the Parisians *have this passion the* most strongly developed. It *common, indeed,* to the most savage, as well as

the most civilised nations; for I have seen the Hindu strip himself naked, and bet at *chukra* the last rag in his possession; the African stakes his wife and children; but our neighbours may plunge their families, to the third and fourth generation, in misery and destitution. The pauper sells his only bed—the cradle of his child. The manufacturer takes to the Mont de Piété his tools—steals those of his employers. The diplomatist and the figurante, the financier and the mendicant, all fall down before one idol—a Moloch worse than that of the Valley of Gehenna—a monster without pity or remorse, who delights in the tears, and groans, and gnashings of teeth of his votaries, nor quits his prey till he tracks them to the Morgue—name of horrid sound! and yet the last refuge and sole resting-place of his infatuated victims.

How easy it is to moralise! I should like to know if I always had this infernal bias, or if it was engrafted in me, or whether I was seized at that time with the general epidemy, taking the infection, like the cholera, from those about me, or from the air which I was respiring. Oh, worse than wind-walking pestilence is play! It has a subtle poison, and more kinds of death; no, not death! for *I* live, —if dying from day to day can be called life.

The first weeks of my *séjour* passed like days, nay, *hours; but* I did not confine myself to Paris itself. *Few foreigners*, or even natives, know the beauty of

the environs. These were the scenes of my rides by day. In the evening I assisted at some French *réunion*, or mixed in the *soirées* of our own country; frequented the Opéra Italienne, where not a note is lost; and such notes! For Pasta was the prima donna. Being *un peu friand*, I frequently dined at the Rocher de Concal. I mention that restaurant because I have reason to remember it. The Rocher de Concal boasts none of the magnificence of Very's or Beauvilliers. The entrance is incumbered with the shells of the *huitres d'Ostende*, the most delicious of oysters. The rooms are not much larger than boxes at the opera, but they inclose a world of fun. The rustling of silk is often heard there, and one meets in the narrow passages veiled forms hastening to some mysterious rendezvous.

It was here that I became acquainted with the Prince M——. His was a fatal initial, and might have reminded me of what he proved to be—my Mephistophiles. M—— was one of those princes that *fourmillent* in all the capitals of Europe. He was about thirty years of age. His figure was tall, slight, and emaciated, and corresponded with his countenance, that was of a paleness approaching to marble, and might be said to have no expression, so complete a mastery had he obtained over his feelings. His equipage had nothing at first sight *remarkable. The cabriolet* was of a sombre colour, *and the harness without* ornaments; but the horse was

not to be matched for beauty and power. His dress seemed equally plain; but, on closer inspection, you discovered it was of a studied elegance, the colours being so well matched that the eye had nothing particular on which to rest. He never was known to laugh, and seldom smiled; he was rather cold, though not forbidding in his manners, and perfectly indifferent whether he amused or not. He never spoke of the politics of the day, of his domains, of his stud or family—much less of himself, his exploits, or his adventures. He never made an observation that was worthy of being repeated, yet never said a foolish thing. With the sex he was a great favourite, for he perfectly understood the science of flattery; but it was with the utmost tact that he put it in requisition. His address was perfect; he spoke French, and indeed several languages, with that admirable choice of phrase for which the Russians are remarkable. The sole occupation of his life was play; and to win or lose seemed a matter of perfect indifference to him, whatever the stake.

There was also of the party that day another foreigner, Baron A——, who had been a Jew. He was his *compagnon de voyage*. Castor and Pollux were not more inseparable. This *alter ego* was a little man, with a grey eye of singular archness, and a light moustache, as most Germans have. His whole *fortune* consisted of five hundred louis, which he *carried about* with him;—an excellent nest-egg, to

ne contrived to double annually this poor capital. One year he was at Rome, another at Florence, a third at Vienna—no; there he was too well known. A gambler, like a prophet, has no honour in his own country. The last spring he had passed in London, where, of course, he had the *entrée* at Almack's, and now opened the campaign under the most promising auspices at Paris. The baron was a sort of lion's-provider—the pilot-fish of the shark.

We separated at an early hour, and I afterwards met my new *friends* at an hotel in the Faubourg St. Honoré, where there was, as usual, an écarté table. Écarté was then all the rage; though, like our all-fours, it had originally been the game of the *peuple*, or rather in Paris of the *laquais*. It is a game uniting skill and chance; but it is a game of countenance; a game, also, in which the cards played with being fewer in number than at whist, it is no difficult matter to scratch an important one, so as to know in time of need where to find it, or to *sauter le coup*. That evening, for the first time, I was induced to take a hand, and, in my innocence of such manœuvres, wondered that my opponent turned up the king so much oftener than myself. In time my eyes were opened, and I discovered that other *tricheries* were practicable. For instance, one morning, after a ball given by an English lady, there were found rolled up in one corner of the room two queens and a knave; and, on examining the écarté packs, these were

missing,—had literally been discarded,—a circumstance which rendered the success of two officers of the *garde du corps*, who cleaned out the party, by no means problematical. But I was now initiated; and a witty writer says—

> "That where that pestilence, play, once leaves a taint,
> It saps the bone, and pierces to the marrow,
> And then 'tis easier to extract an arrow."

How willing we all are to put off the evil moment, to string anecdote on anecdote, and weave parenthesis in parenthesis, rather than come to the point! Does it not remind us of the tricks of the wrestler to avoid the grasp of his more powerful antagonist? But it must come; so let me proceed with my confession.

As I was leaving the room, the prince came up to me and said, "Demain voulez-vous, monsieur, être des nôtres? There is a dinner at the *salon*, and I will take you with me as my 'umbra,' and present you to the Marquis ——." In an evil hour I consented.

The *maisons de jeu* at Paris are farmed by a society, who purchase of the government the privilege of opening a certain limited number—if I remember right, five. In order to prevent unfair play, a *commis* of the police is in daily attendance at the opening of the packs of cards, and they are lodged in the *office* every night. So far so good. But the advantages in favour of the bank are so great, that after

the payment of several hundred thousand pounds sterling to the revenue, after defraying the expenses of hotels, cashiers, croupiers, lackeys, &c., &c., the *associés* divide twenty or thirty per cent. At the head of these establishments is the *Salon des Etrangers.* The prime minister, or master of the ceremonies, was then the Marquis de L——. He was the last of the *aisles de pigeon,* which he wore *bien poudrées.* He had been an *émigré,* and, like many of them, had passed twenty years in England without knowing a word of the language. He was distinguished by an ease of manner and a politeness, though rather exaggerated, of the *vieille cour.* Soon after my introduction to him he lost his appointment, it having been discovered that the cashier, *by some mistake,* nightly gave him fifty napoleons in exchange for a billet of five hundred francs. By the by, the office of president of the *salon* was in considerable request, and was afterwards filled by a general officer who had once been in the English service.

It was one of the dinners that were given three times a week. We passed through a range of servants in splendid liveries to the *salon à manger,* where I found sixty guests, consisting, not only of the foreigners most distinguished for rank, fortune, and consideration, but *pairs de France, députés* of all parties, —in fact, the *élite* of Paris. Before each was placed *a carte. It was not* one of your English bills of fare, *with its plats de résistance;* but earth, air, and ocean

had been ransacked, and all the skill of the most consummate *artistes* employed to furnish out the table. Every sort of wine circulated in quick succession; but, when I looked around me, I saw no hilarity in this assembly. The viands seemed to pall upon the taste, the goblet passed unquaffed. Gambling is the most selfish of vices: it admits of no society; every one seemed too much occupied with his own thoughts even to address his neighbour. Was I happy myself? No. The soul instinctively seems to foresee all the miseries that originate from a single false step, inspiring us with certain vague apprehensions that with a vain casuistry we endeavour to dissipate. In fact, I never enjoyed a dinner less, and was as pleased at its termination as most of the party were anxious for the real object of the meeting—*le commencement de la fin, ou la fin du commencement—le jeu.*

The hotel where we had assembled was of the time of Louis the Fifteenth, and had belonged to one of his numerous mistresses; the taste, however, of his predecessor reigned there. In front was a *cour d'honneur*, large enough to drown the rattle of carriages and noise from without; and behind was a garden laid out in the English style, and full of odoriferous shrubs, then in full bloom, particularly the lilac, the laburnum, and the red-thorn, that *wafted* their perfume through the unfolded doors, *whilst at intervals* was heard the plashing of a foun-

:ain. The three principal rooms, two of which were dedicated to *rouge et noir* and French hazard, were in shape octagonal; the compartments, which were fantastically chased, and rich in gilding, served as a framework to pictures in the manner of Watteau, and probably by the hand of one of his pupils. The ceilings were similar in taste, and described some exploits of Jupiter, whose representative was the monarch himself, according to the fashion of the day. The only light in each of these apartments proceeded from a lamp shaded by green silk, that diffused its mellow and softened rays around, and threw a brilliant and dazzling effulgence on the table. Along the centre were ranged the dealers and bankers; and before them heaps of gold and silver, and *billets de banc*, and red and white counters, their representatives. On both sides were the players; and the broad glare, shadowless and impending, displayed their features. Many of them were known to me by name. There was, with his noble and portly figure and countenance, much resembling the busts of Charles Fox, the late Earl of T——, who with perfect *sang-froid* lost his twenty-five thousand pounds a year, and thought the only use of money was to buy pieces of ivory marked with numbers on them, and that the next pleasure in life to winning was to lose. To his right was *B—— H——*, with his handsome profile, *Hyperion locks, and* unmeaning red-and-white face,

incapable of an expression either of joy or chagrin; Lord M——, who went by the sobriquet of Père la Chaise; S——, bent double with care, and wrinkled with premature old age; the young and emaciated Lord Y——, the only one of his family who resembles his father, and inheriting from him the same propensity; and by his side Benjamin Constant, whose ardent spirit, like the volcano under Vesuvius, was for ever breaking out in the excitement of love, or politics, or play; his hair was grey, as if scorched by the working of his brain; his frame consumed as by an inward fire; his cheek bloodless as that of a corpse, for which, but for his eye, he might have been taken;—there was a desolateness in every trait of his countenance, and a nervous sensibility accompanied every cast of the die that it was painful to witness. These were some of the *crêpes* party. The Prince M—— was not among them: he had found more attractive metal—was closeted in a cabinet at écarté.

For some hours I looked on as an indifferent spectator. I had come fortified by a long colloquy held with myself, the result of which was a determination not to be duped. I had had too much experience of the world to fall into the snare—I had resisted many worse temptations—I knew too well the chances to risk even the few napoleons cautiously *put into my* purse. "Facilis descensus Averni," *says the poet.* Insensibly I took an interest in the

game. I flattered my self-vanity by thinking that when such a one threw in, I should not have been on the *contre*, or should have withdrawn my money before he *sauted*,—that I should have taken the odds, or betted them differently from Lord This or Monsieur *Tel*. In short, for me the veil of Isis was lifted, the mysteries of play revealed. I alone was inspired; and so for once it was to prove. One of the circle left his seat, and I filled up the vacancy. I sat writhing till my turn came. All had thrown out, and all had backed the casters. I now took the box: by my clumsy way of handling it, and shaking the dice, it was perceived that I was a tyro. And now the *contre* was covered with gold and notes: "Seven!" I cried; "eleven's the nick!" I changed the main: still my luck continued. In short, I threw in nine times, leaving all my winnings to accumulate, and found myself in possession of twenty-four thousand francs. It was now suggested to me that the bank was only responsible for twelve thousand. Twice more did I tempt Fortune, and with equal success, and then handed over the box, and gave up my place to a new comer; and, without any one seeming to notice my departure, betook myself to my apartment—but not to sleep. I was in a fever of delight; visions more enchanting than those of El Dorado visited my *couch. I had found* the magic wand,—had gained *the golden branch* in the Æneid,—opened to myself

a mine of wealth,—an inexhaustible treasure. At daybreak I raised myself in the bed, and counted it,—arranged in heaps the glittering treasure. I had all Paris in my hand! I would have an hotel, I would have horses, carriages, all that wealth could purchase should be mine. That gold which others sighed for, toiled for, sinned for, was mine, easily obtained, and won expressly to be spent. Horace, when in his poetic dream of immortality he cried "Album mutor in alitem," and soared above the heads of the admiring world, felt no raptures compared with mine.

My success was soon blazoned abroad, and my gains exaggerated. In the course of the day I had a visit of congratulation from the prince. "There is a fête and ball at Frascati," said he, on taking leave; "you will be there?" There was a devilish smile on his face. It was the first time I had ever seen him smile.

It was ten o'clock, and that temple of Circe was flooded with light, and filled with women and men of all ages:—no, not of all, for one of the conditions of admission is, besides being well dressed, that a person must be *of age*. *Le Jeu* has no objection to the gold of a father, a lover, or a husband; but he disdains the pocket-money of a minor. He has a great respect for all the decencies of life: he requires a well-filled purse and an elegant toilette. *Enter, ye* rich and lively!—come, and welcome!

There is sure to be gold where there are women, and women where there is gold.

At the entrance of this hell, the *laquais*, after a scrutiny of my person, took my hat, and, by means of an iron instrument attached to a long pole, with a practised dexterity lifted it to peg 200, where it assumed its place in the well-marshalled ranks of its comrades. I afterwards observed that it was the only thing most of the owners carried away with them.

The first room was occupied by a roulette table. The grand saloon, of which there is, or was, an admirable picture in the Oxford Street Bazaar, containing the well-known portraits of very many who frequented it, is dedicated to *rouge et noir*, or *trente et quarante*, and was encircled two or three deep by a crowd of both sexes, all preserving a profound silence, only interrupted by the *Messieurs, faites, votre jeu!—Le jeu est fait!—Rien plus!* of the dealer; for the noise of the *ratliers* that had shovelled the gold and five-franc pieces into a heap had ceased, and all were breathlessly awaiting the *coup*. The *coup* was made: *quarante: rouge gagne.* It was then a horrid sight to mark the expression of the different feelings that agitated this assembly—this Pandæmonium! Some tore their hair from their heads in handsful,—some gnashed their teeth like the *damned in* the Sistine chapel,—others, *their eyes almost* starting out of their sockets,

uttered horrid oaths and blasphemous exclamations, —and one, who had his hand in his breast, withdrew it, dyed in blood, without being sensible of the wounds his nails had inflicted! But, as if this spectacle of tortured and degraded humanity were not enough, it was still more appalling to observe the countenances of the women, who had staked their last louis on the turn of the card! Their splendid dresses, their silks and gauze, their *cachemires de l'Inde*, that glitter of gold and gems, their necklaces of pearl, and earrings of diamond,—all that serves to heighten and embellish beauty, by a horrid contrast only gave them a greater deformity, reminding us of Pauline Borghese on her deathbed daubing her cadaverous cheeks with rouge, and tricking herself out in the same magnificent costume she had worn in the Tuileries when she shone the wonder and admiration of Paris; assuming in the last agonies of dissolution the voluptuous attitude she had chosen for that masterpiece of art, that wonderful creation of the greatest of modern sculptors, Canova.

O that these Phrynes could at that moment have seen in the mirrors, that on all sides reflected them, their hollow eyes—their violets lips—their livid cheeks! The snakes of Leonardo's Medusa would have made them perfect. No; they had no *eyes or ears* but for that hideous old Sultan whose *seraglio they* had formed,—*le Jeu*.

The *rouge et noir* table being thus *agreeably* filled, I sat down to roulette, and placed before me my packet of notes, being determined this time to break the bank. I turned some of my *billets* into gold, and began, during the revolutions of the wheel of Fortune, to cover the ciphers. Sixty-two times the original stake would be good interest for less than as many seconds! Now for my inspiration—but this time my spirit of prophecy had fled. There was no prize for me. The ball still made its accustomed rounds, and lost itself in some number where I had no stake; now it bounded along, and hung suspended like a bird hovering over its nest; and then, just as it was about to crown my wishes, took a new spring, and, with a provoking coquetry, lavished its favours on one who had not courted them with half, perhaps only the twentieth part, of the fervour I had done. Sometimes, as if to lead me on in the pursuit, she tantalised me by hiding herself in the next number to that I had chosen; and then the succeeding minute crushed all my hopes, and reduced them to nothing, with some zero rouge or zero blanc, or the double misery of two zeros.

I now gave up the lottery of numbers, and betook myself to that of colours. Still I was no diviner. If I made black my favourite, there was sure to be *a run on red; and vice versâ.* I lost my coolness—*ıy temper. I* doubled my stakes—trebled them.

Still the *ratliers* did their merciless office: the *croupiers* still with imperturbable nonchalance swept into a gulf, from which was no return, my notes and gold. In short, in a few hours I was not only stripped of all my winnings, but had borrowed of one of the lackeys three thousand francs, which I was to return the next morning, with a premium of two per cent. He was one of the myrmidons of the *Salon des Etrangers*, and knew I had the *entrée*, and that the loan was a safe one; nay, he pressed me to borrow more; but—*ohe, jam satis!*—I hurried to my porter's lodge, and thence to my apartment, but in a widely different mood from that in which I had entered it the night before. All the scenes of wealth and riches that my imagination had conjured up had vanished. I had horrid dreams. The curtain was withdrawn: it showed me the sad reality of all that had happened, and all that was to happen.

The next day I locked my room door, and held a long dialogue with my conscience. I felt two powers at work within me—two inclinations striving for mastery—two persons, as it were, one acting against and in spite of the other. I endeavoured to arm myself against myself. It was a violent struggle between the principles of good and evil. Whether, like Hercules, I should have made the *same choice*, I know not; but vice never wants for *arguments* or supporters, and in the afternoon came

an invitation, by one of his emissaries, from the prince to dine with him. My foible—the rock on which I have made shipwreck—has been, that I never could say no. I accepted it.

Besides the inseparables, were present, on this occasion, a Prussian colonel and a Polish count. The dinner was *recherché*, the dishes having been sent from different restaurants famous for their *cuisine:* the *ravioli*, for instance, from an Italian house, and the *omelette Russe* from the *Café de Paris*. The mock and real champagne were well iced, and the Chambertin a bouquet of violets. I endeavoured to find a Lethe in the glass, which circulated freely, though it only circulated; for the prince, on the plea of health, drank lemonade, and his guests, as the Italians say, baptized their Lafitte with water. Two nights such as I had passed did not diminish the effect of the wine; and when it was proposed to play at faro, though I knew nothing of the game, I made no objection. It was suggested that the baron should be banker. He had come ready prepared, opened his strong box, and produced his five hundred louis. The practised neatness with which he turned up the cards, the accuracy of his calculations, and correctness of his accounts, might have excited the admiration of any *croupier* at the *salon;* certainly none of them understood his *métier* better. I began *with very small stakes,* which were unlimited. I *soon, however, followed* the example of the circle,

and played higher. I lost. The two strangers appeared to lose also, and retired at an early hour.

I had added one hundred louis to the baron's capital. Whilst I was in search of my hat to make my escape, A—— had been employed in preparing an écarté pack, and offered to give me my *revanche*, our host encouraging me to take it by saying he would back me.

I sat down; and, as the prince was interested in the result, I asked his advice, but he told me he never gave or took it. My adversary had an extraordinary run of luck,—almost always *voled* me when I did not propose, and scored the king so often that I could not help observing it. The prince in the mean time walked about the room, occasionally looking over my cards; at length he declined participating in my stakes, and betted with me largely on his own account. Ill-fortune continued to pursue me; still I played higher and higher, till my score had swelled to a frightful amount. My immense losses sobered me, and I then had my suspicions that all was not right. Opposite to the table was a mirror over the chimney, which extended from the marble slab to the ceiling. I was fronting it, when I perceived by the reflection the prince standing over my shoulder: he was taking snuff, and, in the act of so doing, raised up his fingers in a manner *that excited* my attention. I now determined to *watch the* pair more closely. I observed that the

German always awaited the sign before he decided on proposing or refusing, and once inadvertently did so without even looking at his own hand. It is true, we were both at four, but I had not an *atout* or court-card: the consequence was that I lost the game. It was now clear that I had fallen into the hands of sharpers. I found myself minus thirty thousand francs. Throwing down the pack, I got up, and walked about the room for some time, in order to collect my thoughts and consider how to act. Though confident of having been cheated, almost unknown as I was in Paris, I was aware it would not be easy to convince their numerous and powerful friends of the fact. I therefore determined to pay the money, and insult one or the other so grossly that he must give me my *revanche* in a different way. Thinking that the scheme, however concocted, had been put in execution at the prince's own house, and that it was rendered still blacker by a breach of hospitality, I made choice of him with perfect self-possession. I asked for pen, ink, and paper; and having written cheques payable on demand at my bankers' in London for the *par nobile fratrum*, I turned to the prince, and said, presenting him with his share of the plunder, "Monsieur, voilà votre argent; vous savez comment il était gagné." Running his eye over the amount to ascertain *if it were correct*, he carefully folded up the paper, *and put it in his* pocket; and then, with im-

perturbable coolness, turned to me, and said, "Monsieur, vous m'avez insulté, et vous me ferez l'honneur de m'en rendre raison." "Très, très volontiers," I replied; "c'est ce que je cherchais." "The sooner the better," said the prince; "I will leave my friend the baron to settle the preliminaries." With these words he walked slowly to the door, and left me with his associate. He had not been gone more than a few minutes when the Polish count, who was lodging in the same hotel (it was in the Rue de la Paix), and had just returned from some orgies, made his appearance, probably thinking to find us still engaged in play. The baron, without entering into particulars, immediately explained to him that the prince and myself had had a serious misunderstanding, and that it had ended in his claiming satisfaction. I was not sufficiently intimate with any one in Paris to disturb him at that hour in the morning; and, thinking it a mere formality to have a second, readily asked the count to be my friend. He consented with the best grace imaginable. It was now explained to me that it is the custom (though I believe such is not the case), for the challenger to choose his own weapons.

"The prince," observed the baron, "has two blades of the finest Spanish steel; they are beautifully watered, and it is a pleasure to look at them. *They have* never yet been used: monsieur," added *he, addressing* the count, "shall have his choice."

All this was said with the utmost nonchalance, as though he had been only treating of a trial of skill, and not a duel *à l'outrance.*

I had never taken a fencing-lesson since I was at school, and then only for a few months of old Angelo. The prince I knew to be almost as dexterous in the art as a *maître d'armes.* The first qualification for an accomplished gambler is to be a duellist; foils were at that moment lying in a corner of the room, and he had probably been practising the very day before; indeed, it was almost the only exercise he took at any time.

To have made, however, my want of skill a plea for the adoption of pistols, might, I knew, be answered by the baron's professing the prince to be the worst of shots, besides its being a deviation from the established rule in such cases for me to have a voice.

Strange to say, I felt little uneasiness on the subject: I had a quick eye, great activity, and superior physical strength; and I had heard that the most expert fencer is often at a loss to parry the determined assault of an aggressor, even though he should hardly know the use of his weapon. A sense, too, of my wrongs, and a desire of revenge, added to that moral courage in which I was never deficient, rendered me bold and confident.

It was now broad daylight. The *fiacre* rattled up *to the door, and the* count and I got into it; the

prince following in his cabriolet, accompanied by A——. We drove through the *Champs Elysées*, passed the *Port Maillot*, and, without meeting a single carriage, arrived at our destination. If there were ever a spot where a lover of nature might die almost without regret, it is this favourite resort of the *beau monde* of Paris. Avenues ankle-deep in sand, cut into straight lines; *allées* without verdure, that lead to nothing; a wood without trees. Such is the *Bois de Boulogne.*

The coachman, who had a perfect knowledge of the localities, and the object of our morning ridè, pulled up at a spot where four roads met, and, having alighted, we followed an ill-defined path for a few hundred yards, till we came to an opening in the brushwood that was scarcely above our heads. It had served for a recent encounter, for I perceived the prince step on one side to avoid a stain of blood on one of the tufts of grass that here and there rose rankly among the sand. He appeared not to notice it, and continued to talk on indifferent subjects to his companion.

Having received our swords, all new, and bright, and glittering, as the baron promised they should be, and taken up our ground, without waiting to cross blades, I precipitated myself on my adversary, and endeavoured to beat down his guard: so impetuous *was my onset*, that he retreated, or rather, I drove *him before* me for several yards. Those who have

not experienced it may conceive what a strange grating sensation the meeting of two pieces of steel produces; but they cannot be aware how it quickens the pulse, and that there is in every electric shock such fierce rage, and hatred, and revenge, as burnt within me then. Still, however, the prince parried my thrusts, and kept me at arm's length. All I now remember is, that I made a last desperate lunge—that I almost lost my balance—that I felt the point of my adversary's sword enter my side, and then a film came over my eyes. When I awoke from this trance I found myself in a crowded hospital, with a *Sœur de Charité* leaning over me.

THE DEATHBED CONFESSION.

FROM THE POSTHUMOUS PAPERS OF A LATE SURGEON.

"One fatal remembrance."—MOORE.

I HAVE often thought that no profession is so fraught with the recollection of human suffering, mental and corporeal, in all its varied and characteristic shades of life and death, as that of the surgeon and general medical practitioner. The attorney in the course of business is sufficiently connected with misery, Heaven knows. It may be his stern duty to drag from the writhing hand of poverty the last shilling; he may have to issue an execution, and, amid the wailings of a forlorn family, see torn from them, by his minion the broker, their every household chattel—perhaps leaving a once smiling and happy hearth desolate indeed; nay, the attorney may have to consign some hopeless debtor to all the wretchedness of a prison for life; but the melancholy sequel—the last horrors of existence that border upon the mystic awfulness of eternity—*the deathbed*—*belongs* of right to us, and those whose holy *ministry breathes*, through a blessed Redeemer, the

consoling balm of peace to the repentant and departing soul!

The wealthy, the poor, the honourable and ignoble, in all the lights and shadows of circumstance and character, call upon the professor of the "healing art" to administer the fruits of his study, to expel that foe to health and enjoyment, fell disease, with its hydra head. In the chambers of the sick, in the grey of early morning, or with the garish sunlight of the day streaming through the half-closed curtains, or at the more solemn midnight hour, when "half the world is hushed in deep repose," the eventful pages of life and death sometimes display strange and startling scenes to us — when the anguish of the body and mind conjoined in the sufferer has thrown off the artificialities of every-day existence. The spirit then bordering upon the confines of another world, in the muttering of the broken sleep, the sudden start and exclamation, or even in the very raving of delirium, oftentimes but too eloquently tells of woe or vice, in all the horrors of their true details. Amid such scenes I have often noted that truth has worn a garb stranger than fiction.

Some such motive, I may say, has induced me to write the following recollection.

My early life in the profession was accompanied by a circumstance that, to say the least of it, was *not a little singular.* It is now some five-and-twenty *years since I first* commenced practice in this at

present overgrown metropolis of London. The first house I occupied was in a style commensurate with my humble fortunes, in a small thoroughfare leading out of Oxford Street. Having but few friends, and those resident in the country, and but a very meagre capital for support until I got into active employment, the knowledge of this fact perhaps only served to stimulate me in my endeavours to obtain practice; but, in spite of every effort, it was to no purpose. I felt myself under a kind of ban, of having the tolerable portion of skill I knew myself possessed of, remain unknown. Daily, hourly, as I vainly hoped and sought for business, and as my capital gradually decreased, I had the mortification of knowing that my circumstances soon threatened to involve me in all the horrors of poverty.

If I had been a single man, I could have managed to have borne my ill-fortune perhaps with something like resignation; but there were two beings entirely dependent upon me for support—a young wife, and an infant at her breast.

One dull December evening my wife and I were mourning over our gloomy circumstances. The tea-things had been just removed, and we were sitting in the little parlour adjoining my small and seldom visited surgery. As I contemplated for a moment the horrors of beggary, I burst out into some of *those repinings*, which I did not possess philosophy *enough* entirely to suppress, while my angel wife

endeavoured to soothe the rugged bitterness of my spirit with the first and last exhortation of the wretched—to hope! My last twenty pounds had been taken from my banker's hands the preceding week, and where I was to obtain a fresh supply when that was gone, Heaven only knew. Something was to be resolved upon soon; but each plan proposed was speedily rejected as impracticable. We had sunken into a silent fit of reflection, gazing at the fire, when the voices of many persons, apparently approaching the house, fell upon our ears.

"This is the house—here 's the nearest doctor's. Take care of the gemman," cried several voices.

I rushed to the door, which was already opened by the servant, and by the light of an adjoining lamp I beheld a considerable crowd of people half surrounding four men, employed in supporting the body of one who, twenty rough voices at one and the same moment informed me, had been run over by a carriage.

Conducting the four men into my surgery, I had my patient placed in a reclining arm-chair. He appeared covered with mud and in great pain. In crossing Oxford Street, one of the men who assisted in bringing him informed me, he had been run over by the wheels of a carriage driven at a furious rate. The stranger, judging from a single glance at his tall and attenuated figure, had once, no doubt, been a singularly *fine man*, though now debilitated by age *and grief, as his* white hair and the furrowed lines of

his open and intellectual countenance seemed to infer. He was suffering acute pain, which he informed me proceeded from his right leg. I now perceived, indeed, that this limb laid in a very lifeless and unnatural position. Taking my scissors from my case, I immediately cut down the seam of the trousers, and through part of the stocking, laying bare the hurt limb, which, as I had expected, exhibited a severe fracture, through which a portion of ragged bone protruded. At the same moment the old gentleman had with much difficulty raised himself a little, and now bent his eyes over the shattered leg.

"Ha! as I thought!" he exclaimed, in a tone of voice in which pain, self-possession, and resignation were singularly blended. "Fracture of the *tibia* and *fibula*, just below the *upper third*. You must have recourse to your splints."

At this observation, which I knew could only have emanated from a medical man, the slight hope of reward I had cherished at once vanished from my mind, and I prepared as cheerfully as I could to render those services to a brother of the profession that were called for by humanity, and rendered gratuitously from custom. Indeed, I apparently had little reason to regret the discovery; for, from the old man's dress, it would have been reasonable to *infer that* his resources admitted but of a very *wretched fee.*

By the time I had cleaned the wound and bandaged on the splints,—a painful operation, which my patient bore with unshrinking firmness,—he complained of considerable faintness, which I relieved by administering a small glass of brandy.

"I fear this will go hard with my life," said the old gentleman, regarding my countenance with a steady glance.

"If I were to tell you that you are not in considerable danger, I should deceive you, sir," I replied, at the same time inwardly dreading the worst from the evidently debilitated state of my patient's frame.

"Well, God's will be done, and not that of a wretched sinner like me!" murmured the stranger, laying a kind of bitter emphasis upon the latter word.

The men who had carried my patient, and who seemed to belong to that very doubtful class who, without any direct employment, may generally be seen congregated round the coach stands in London, now took the opportunity of asking very significantly if they were *wanted* any longer. I immediately perceived their drift, and asked my patient if it would not be better to send a note to his family or friends to apprise them of the accident, before making his appearance among them.

"No, *it is needless*; that pain is mercifully *spared me and them*. I have no family—no friends," *replied the old gentleman*, in a voice so forlorn that

it went to my heart at once, and even for a moment seemed to affect the men standing by.

"Shall I call the gemman a coach?" inquired one.

"No," replied my patient; "that is the worst conveyance for a broken limb. Take a cab, and obtain for me, if possible, a stretcher, and——"

The old man, evidently with a strong mental effort, suppressed the anguish he felt from his fractured limb; but the agony he endured was but too perceptible in the writhing of his countenance, down which the large drops of perspiration trickled one after the other. I was moved at the sight, and a feeling of commiseration got the better of my selfishness: indeed, I even forgot my own situation at the moment, as I made him the offer of a vacant bed in the house.

"You are kind, sir," he replied, a flush succeeding the deathlike paleness of his care-stricken features. "I am not quite prepared to die—that is, I could wish to live *some months* longer, and I fear a removal at present might greatly increase the inflammation; therefore, if I do not incumber you, I will accept your offer. But there is one, my kind landlady,—you must apprise her of my misfortune." And he gave me his address, when I immediately penned a note, which I dispatched by one of the men to the street in Tottenham Court Road where *Mr. Benfield* (the name of my patient) resided.

After giving him an anodyne draught, by assisting

the men a little, I managed to get him carried upstairs, without inducing much additional pain from the fractured limb.

"Perhaps the gen'elman will have the goodness to think of us now," said one of the men, as we got my patient into bed, endeavouring to assume an air of modesty, which sat upon his coarse features with intolerable grace.

"True, I must remember I have to reward your humanity, as it is not the worldly fashion to confer services for nothing." And the old gentleman, putting his hand into a small side-pocket of his great-coat, as it hung by his bedside, took out a sovereign, which, to my surprise, he gave to be divided among the men.

The sight of this sum, so much larger a donation than these worthies had expected to receive, wrought an almost magical effect upon them, and brought forth numerous professions of gratitude.

"I see, sir, you're a real gemman," uttered the fellow who had been spokesman previously. "Although I didn't think of it afore, I can tell you the number of the coach as knocked you down."

"It is of little consequence," said the stranger with a deep sigh.

"But the willain, Jem Burns, as drove over your honour——" continued the man.

"*I forgive him with* all my heart," uttered the *benevolent old gentleman.*

Perceiving that the sleeping potion was already beginning to take a slight effect upon my patient, I placed the bell-rope close to his head, and forbidding the expression of some thanks he was about to utter, I led my rough assistants downstairs, when they took their departure with many offers of service to "the queer old gen'elman as didn't mind people running over him."

In the parlour I found my kind partner all anxiety to learn the state of our guest, and while discoursing on the suddenness of the occurrence, Mrs. Smith, his landlady, arrived. She was a woman past the meridian of life, and, with all the vulgar garrulity so common to her station in society, displayed a strong feeling of sorrow for Mr. Benfield's accident. The cause, indeed, of this emotion was sufficiently accounted for, when she informed us that her lodger had, by his great attention and medical skill, saved the life of her eldest son.

"Oh, sir," continued the widow, for such she was, "poor dear old Mr. Benfield is the best of men. He's never happy but when he's doing good to somebody or other; though, poor gentleman, his sadness at times, and his lone ways, sitting up as he will half through the night, praying and calling himself names, as I've known him to do, makes me quite miserable. And then the old gentleman, if *he only hears* of a case of distress, will run out in *all weathers* to give relief. He's the best of human

beings, sir, though he often talks as if he 'd done something wicked in his youth."

"Is he not in practice as a surgeon?" I inquired.

"O no, sir," replied Mrs. Smith, "though I heard him say he was once a doctor when a young man; and then, as though the recollection made him miserable, he told me in his mild way never to ask him questions, or remind him of it; so that I and my eldest boy, whose life he saved, fancy he might have been unfortunate in business."

"But has he no relations or acquaintance?"

The kind landlady's face assumed a look of grave thought as she replied, "O no; there it is where the old gentleman's sadness sometimes lays. He will talk in the most moving way for hours together in the middle of the night of his wife and children, that are dead. And then to see how hardly he treats himself in his living, when he thinks nothing can be too good for others, it makes me quite fretful to see it; but he will have his own way, and says anything is good enough for him."

It is almost unnecessary to say that my wife and myself were but too interested in the welfare of the excellent and eccentric old man, who had so strangely been made an inmate under our roof, not to listen with much interest to the brief particulars *we collected of him from* Mrs. Smith.

As the kind-hearted landlady seemed desirous of

seeing her lodger, I immediately led the way up into his room. From his heavy and laboured breathing as I opened the door, I knew that he was asleep, and motioned Mrs. Smith to tread softly, while I shaded the light which I carried in my hand, so that its rays might not tend to disturb his slumbers. My patient's sunken cheek I perceived, as I bent over the bed for a moment, wore an alabaster paleness, which, with the few floating grey hairs streaming over his deeply furrowed countenance, gave him an appearance peculiarly venerable. Still, from a slight spasmodic play of feature, and an occasional half murmur in the hard breathing, it was but too easy to perceive that the old gentleman was in a high state of fever, and that his sleep, so far from being repose, seemed

"But a continuance of enduring thought."

All my fears were respecting the strong tendency to fever, so evident in the frame of my patient, and this reflection I had just whispered to Mrs. Smith, when he uttered a groan; then followed a half-muttering sound, as though he were talking in his sleep. Fearful of awaking him, I had just motioned to my kind-hearted companion to follow me out of the chamber, when the slumberer, in a voice whose cavernous and half-stifled tone seemed to emanate from the very depths of his chest, ex*claimed*—

"*Blessed* Lord! when shall I be forgiven?"

There was something so solemn in this appeal, that I was deeply impressed by it as I softly closed the door.

"That 's just like him, sir," said Mrs. Smith, as I conducted her downstairs. "To hear Mr. Benfield at times, you 'd think he 'd been a very wicked man, when it 's quite impossible such a good man could ever have done anything wicked."

Three months passed before anything like perfect adhesion took place in the fractured bones. During this period I had many opportunities of becoming intimately acquainted with the character of a man, whose extensive knowledge and erudition were only equalled by his Christian philanthropy and humanity From many conversations I had with him, my previous belief was confirmed, that my patient was labouring under some painful recollection of early indiscretion or guilt, which his over-sensitive mind, it appeared to me, seemed to imagine could never be atoned for in that world "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." I now became the confidential agent of the kind old gentleman in a hundred actions of the purest benevolence. Like a second Howard, I discovered that he had made it his study to find out and relieve the wretched and distressed—

"Do good by stealth, and blush to find it fame."

My own embarrassments, notwithstanding several *patients I had obtained* through the representations

of Mrs. Smith, had now grown too serious to be concealed any longer. Indeed, a few days after the removal of my patient, I found myself in circumstances of poverty peculiarly mortifying.

I had scarcely two pounds in the house, and my poor wife now indeed was inconsolable. After revolving a variety of expedients, I saw but one way of obtaining money sufficient to defray the landlord's demand, and therefore in a letter to Mr. Benfield stated my present difficulties, and requested the loan of twenty pounds. This gave me some pain; and while anxiously expecting an answer, Mr. Benfield drove up to the door in a coach. I could not help remarking that he looked more than usually pale and troubled. Seizing my arm in an agitated and nervous grasp, he drew me into my study, and shut the door.

"And how was it I had no suspicion?" said he. "You are poor; you want money; in practice, and want money. Why have you not told me of this before?"

I hesitated for a moment in offering him my reasons.

"Ah! I know the pride of a professional man. Oh! I was once a medical man—poor. Would I had ever remained so! but temptation came like a fiend, accompanied by opportunity,—and a long life of *anguish* has been the result." And the excited old man now buried his face in his hands. I was moved.

"This is weakness, I know you will say," he continued; "but, oh! if you knew *all*, you would cease to wonder at these ebullitions of a repentant spirit. The similarity of your present situation with my own, on my first entrance into life, has called up these feelings. My prayer to Heaven is, that you may shun the fatal rock upon which my every hope of eternal happiness has been wrecked. But come, give me pen and ink; at least I may reap some happiness from your wants." And, hastily taking a banker's book from his pocket, he wrote a cheque for two hundred pounds.

So unexpected and handsome a gift at first entirely deprived me of the power of returning thanks, and I attempted to object receiving a sum, to the fourth part of which I had no claim. But I was met in the old gentleman's usual determined manner when contributing to the wants of others.

"And why should you not keep it?" he uttered calmly. "It has been honourably earned in the exercise of your profession. I feel happier at this moment than I have for many years. Oh!" he added, raising his eyes upwards, while the tears trickled down his furrowed cheeks,—"oh! that some one in *my* hour of need had thus stepped before me;" and his head again sunk between his hands, and for a moment he seemed buried in the *one terrible thought* that appeared to canker his existence.

As he left my house he exclaimed, "God bless you! you have made me happy if I have in any way contributed to serve you. In difficulties, in distresses, and misery, may you ever be enabled to resist temptation to evil! That I have not done so has made me the wretch you behold. When I have grown calmer I will again call and see you."

Two days passed, and I heard nothing of Mr. Benfield. On the third, my wife at breakfast was reminding me that it would look neglectful if I did not call, when Mrs. Smith was announced. Her benevolent lodger had been thrown upon a sick bed the day previous, and, having grown considerably worse, she had with his consent come for me.

It is needless to say that I immediately waited on him.

His greeting was as kind as usual, but, if anything, more sad and solemn. He had been attacked by fever.

"I know I am going fast. The Almighty has already prolonged my days more than"—his voice here fell into a mysterious whisper—"a more than I had a right to expect. I have wandered about the world the last twenty years of my life, a wretched, and but for the all-redeeming mercies of our blessed Saviour, I might say, hopeless man. But now I feel—indeed, I have had presentiments I rely upon—*that* my time on earth is nearly up."

Feeling his pulse, I found it beating 130. He

was, indeed, in a high state of fever, no doubt induced in a great measure by the active working of his mind. His leg that had been so lately fractured I was sorry to perceive in a very inflamed state; and, although I insisted upon the application of leeches immediately, he shook his head with a mournful presentiment of his approaching fate.

"It is of no use; but you shall have your own way, my young friend. I feel 'that within which passeth show' which tells me I have not long to live."

I left him, indeed, that day with the conviction that his constitution, unable to rally from the severe shock it had so lately received, was sinking fast, and that the excellent old man had but a short interval before he was destined to be ushered into a better world.

In the evening I found him considerably worse. In spite of topical depletion and other remedies I used, there still was a strong tendency to inflammation. His throat had become slightly affected, while a general languor and debility reduced him to a state of great weakness. Although evidently on his deathbed, he was resigned, and even cheerful.

That night there was a slight inclination to delirium, which, however, subsided a little by the morning, when I left him enjoying a gentle doze, to *seek for myself a brief* respite from the fatigue of *watching by his bedside.* On returning in the even-

ing, Mrs. Smith, whom I met at the door, informed me that to her surprise he had sat up in bed, supported by pillows, and had employed himself during great part of the day in writing some letters, notwithstanding all she could do to dissuade him from it, on account of the fatigue and excitement it must necessarily occasion.

On entering his bedroom I found him reclining in a disturbed slumber. Even since the few hours I had last seen him a rapid and deathlike change had taken place in his countenance; the features had become more sharpened, and wore that bluish paleness which is so characteristic of approaching dissolution. Gazing at the old man as he now and then moved restlessly in his troubled sleep, I felt an emotion of sadness deeper than I had experienced for years. His patience,—his humility,—his kind and charitable heart,—his high and cultivated mind, blasted as it seemed by some dark recollection, threw over him, as it were, an almost romantic veil of interest, and made me feel for him as I had once felt for a father whom I had lost.

I know no solitude equal to the melancholy of a sick-chamber, when left to one's own ruminations; the garish gleaming of the candles as their flame is reflected in gigantic shadow upon the bed-curtains or wall; the falling of a cinder from the fire; nay, *the very* ticking of the clock, are apt to cause a *peculiar* sense of dreariness and desolation, which is

anything but lessened by the hard and laboured breathing of the dying.

While my patient slept, desirous, if possible, of relieving the melancholy of my thoughts, I took up an old newspaper that was lying amongst some loose papers on a table near the bed. I mechanically began turning it over, and perceived it was a Scotch paper, published some twenty years previously. Running my eyes over its columns, my attention suddenly became arrested by a heading in large characters of

"HORRIBLE AND MYSTERIOUS MURDER!"

I know not why, but there is a strange fascination that attracts one's attention to the narrative of crime or suffering, and I immediately commenced reading. To the best of my memory the relation ran as follows:

"HORRIBLE AND MYSTERIOUS MURDER.—It is our painful and melancholy task to announce a murder which has just been committed in the very heart of our usually peaceful city, and which has created a sensation of surprise and alarm not easily to be described. The unfortunate victim, we are sorry to say, is Joseph Saunderson, the well-known gigantic porter, who has been for so many years in the service of Messrs. ——, the bankers. Yesterday, in the morning, the unfortunate man was sent early *with a heavy package*, mostly of gold,—in amount *£3,000, it is said*,—to book and enter, by the

evening mail for London. Not returning as soon as he was expected, the chief cashier began to grow anxious about the safety of the parcel, and knowing Saunderson (who had been for the last fifteen years in the employ of the house) to be a remarkably steady man, he was induced to think that something extraordinary must have occurred. On dispatching a clerk to the coach-office, it was ascertained that Saunderson had not been there. Suspicions of the unfortunate man's character became entertained by the firm; the police were called in, and a general search instituted. Half an hour afterwards, we grieve to say, poor Saunderson's body was found lying in —— Passage, weltering in its gore. The unhappy man had taken this unfrequented path to get into —— Street, and had there met his death from the hand of some assassin or assassins at present unknown. On examining the body only one wound was found inflicted, and that was apparently by the thrust of a sharp knife, given with such precision that it had gone completely through the unfortunate man's heart, killing him no doubt, instantly, before any alarm could be given, and evidently inferring the murderer to be well acquainted with the anatomy of the human frame. It is needless to say, the valuable money parcel has been stolen by the *murderer* or murderers. What renders the circumstance so peculiarly singular is, that the crime

should have been committed in the open day, and on a man whose gigantic strength, with a less fatal blow, might have been justly dreaded. This has generally induced the supposition that it has been the deliberately-planned act of more than one individual. As the numbers of the notes are known, and the police actively on the search, a feverish anxiety prevails for the intelligence of the apprehension of the inhuman murderers. Poor Saunderson, whose honesty and industry had procured him the entire confidence of his employers, and who has thus come to a sudden and untimely end, has left behind him a wife and five children to lament his loss.

"On Tuesday a coroner's inquest will be held, when it is to be hoped further particulars will be elicited."

"Poor Saunderson!" I almost unconsciously exclaimed with a sigh.

My aspiration was echoed by another so sepulchral, deep, and intense, so full of human agony and suffering, that I cast my eyes towards the couch from whence the sound proceeded, in the full belief that it was the last tribute of expiring nature. There, to my horror, I beheld Mr. Benfield sitting up in his bed, his few grey hairs wildly streaming *over his attenuated* countenance, and his deep-*sunken eyes gleaming* from under his pent brows,

apparently with a more than mortal light, as they steadfastly regarded me.

"Poor Saunderson indeed!" exclaimed the old man solemnly; "and why do you not give vent unto the feelings of your heart, and curse his cruel and relentless murderer? Behold him here, in this corroded heart and withered frame! You now are in possession of the fatal secret which, for the last twenty years of my wretched existence, has, like some Gorgon, been feasting upon my entrails. Yes, behold here the hitherto undiscovered murderer of the unhappy Saunderson!" And the wretched man buried his livid countenance in his clasped hands, through which the scalding tears fell fast, while sighs, long and heavy, filled the little apartment.

Conquering the shock the old man's sudden exclamation had given rise to, (for his grief and repentance put everything out of my mind at the moment but his sufferings,) and hastily uttering I know not what words of comfort, I sprang towards the bed, and caught him in my arms, as, overcome by his sudden emotion, he fell back and fainted.

Applying a little ammonia to his nose, he slowly opened his eyes, when I endeavoured to allay the excitement under which he was labouring.

"No, I must speak—I feel I must," he exclaimed, *in those* querulous tones I had so often marked as *one of the* signs of approaching dissolution. "You

know my deep, my soul-involving guilt, and something, some slight portion of that remorse which, if human suffering on earth may constitute an expiation in the eyes of the Almighty Disposer of events, I am not without hope may be taken into consideration in my final account. You know my guilt. Now listen to the miserable narrative of a dying man. Oh! beware of temptation; take warning from my unhappy story, and learn that any state is far preferable to the loss of virtue and honour.

"I was young,—in your own profession,—my situation even somewhat like your own. I had married, without due reflection in respect to my worldly means, one whom I loved more than I valued life. The natural gaiety of our hearts led us into the first society of the city in which we resided; and the usual consequence of living beyond an income resulted—we became involved and were threatened with ruin. Oh! had I listened in time to *her*, instead of my accursed pride, and retired from the scene of my former extravagance, all had been well. But there is a web woven by Fate that I believe we are destined to be enmeshed in. I remained—remained to hear the insulting remark,—the half sneer,—the tone of pity from those towards whom I had perchance felt but contempt in *the days of my thoughtless* prosperity. The *changed countenance* of former friends, the taunt of

gratified malignancy from the base-minded at times drove me half mad, and, I believe, changed my nature. Even my gentle and endearing partner failed to console me, and I became morose and savage, detesting myself, and hating all mankind. In this frame of mind, with the stinging reflection that the little practice I had was fast seceding from me, and that I should soon be a beggar, a temptation the most fatal was suddenly thrown in my way. Going into the banking-house of Messrs. —— to receive the amount of a small cheque, I accidentally heard a clerk talking to a fellow-servant of the house respecting a large sum they were to send in the morning by the mail. I knew that from the shipping connection large amounts of gold were constantly being sent up to London: I had even once or twice met their trusted and colossal porter, the unhappy Saunderson, in that Passage which I often traversed, as it saved me a considerable distance in going to one part of the town. The devil that very night filled my mind with one appalling idea—it passed through my brain like lightning, as it were, scathing and consuming. My circumstances were more desperate even than were known. I was daily living in the fear of an arrest. My house was stripped of its contents. I had nothing,—no hope from the world,—still less from those who had once *been friends*. O hour of horror!—I resolved upon *the diabolical* act of murder and robbery. Why

should I dwell on the bloody detail? I waylaid my victim—struck the fatal blow with my knife; and almost before the departing breath had fled, possessed myself of the treasure. Ten thousand furies seemed ringing their plaudits in my ears as I hurried home with the package hidden beneath my cloak, which, before I had committed the murder, I had laid aside with a villain's foresight, and which now covered the sanguine stains that marked me for a murderer. My brain was on fire. The notes, which I knew it would be dangerous to pass, I buried with the package case. You, whom I have left my executor, will have the direction where to find it.*

"It was only after the hurried excitement had ceased that the dreadful and soul-appalling horrors of the atrocious act sunk with a cold and deadly chill into my heart. Then it was that my guilty mind became overwhelmed with terrors unutterable. Nightly—those dreadful nights!—nightly in my dreams I saw the wretched victim, pale and bloody, at my bedside, upbraiding me with my infernal deed. Such visions were frequently followed by fits of

* It is a singular fact, that all the notes and bills of exchange, to the amount of 1,700*l.*, have been recovered, from the directions left by the repentant criminal. The papers were found in a wonderful state of preservation, *considering they had lain* wrapped up for a period of twenty-*nine years in a deal box*, buried in the earth.—Ed.

partial insanity, if I may so term them, in one of which my gentle wife learnt my dreadful secret. Its horrors soon overwhelmed her; and in less than a month the tomb had closed upon her seared and blighted heart.

"Although I lived in a thousand daily terrors, suspicion had never for a moment been directed towards me. Though I had, as it were, bartered my soul for one cursed deed, still I had never touched a shilling of the plundered gold. The fact that most maddened me is to come. Saunderson had scarcely been buried a fortnight, and my wife on the point of death, when news came to say an uncle in the East Indies had died, and left me a handsome fortune. Oh, how I cursed it in my heart!—and, wretch that I was! I rashly accused Providence of betraying me into the commission of the most revolting crime.

"Glad of a pretext to leave Scotland, and disdaining the now proffered smiles of menial parasites, I departed with my two children. The curse of the Almighty seemed to pursue me; my children within a few months of each other died; I was left alone—a branchless and scathed trunk upon the world's waste! What language can do justice to my horrors and remorse? Time, instead of alleviating, seemed only to strengthen the gloomy and harrowing feeling that I was peculiarly marked out as an object of *Divine* wrath in this world, and that more dreaded *world to* come. I sought to appease the Divine

anger by works that, emanating from other hands, might have been considered virtuous. But it seemed fated that I should never cease to feel bitterly the curse of an accusing spirit.

"I have nearly done," pursued the dying man, his sudden excitement yielding to the feelings of exhausted nature,—"I have left the remnant of my property to be applied to certain purposes * which you will find specified in that paper," and he pointed to a packet lying on the table.

His voice during the latter part of his confession had sunk into a low, half-articulate whisper, that intimated a state of complete exhaustion. His senses were yielding to the influence of delirium. Placing his gaunt and bony hands across his forehead, he began rambling for several minutes in an unconnected strain, that was painful to hear.

As I perceived that his late excitement had indeed in a great measure caused this imbecile state, I immediately administered an opiate draught, which shortly had the effect of throwing my patient into a quiet and undisturbed slumber. This induced me to seek a temporary rest in the easy arm-chair I occupied. I was soon in a kind of restless and uneasy doze.

When I awoke the first cold light of another day

* *To be invested in certain* charitable institutions — a *rust that was scrupulously* fulfilled by the late esteemed *iter of this paper.*—ED.

was stealing through the curtained window, giving a sickly hue to the tall flame of the unsnuffed taper on the table. I listened eagerly, but in vain, to catch the respiration of my patient. All was still, save the monotonous ticking of the house clock.

With a dread of the worst, I hastily drew aside a part of the curtain of the bed. To my surprise and horror I beheld my patient kneeling up in bed, his bony hands clasped together, and his head thrown back, while the glassy eyes seemed directed upwards. But there was neither movement nor pulse in the frame before me! the penitent and sorrow-stricken wanderer had breathed his last sigh in prayer to the Almighty!

H. J. M.

MRS. JENNINGS,

"WHO WANTED SOMEBODY TO CARE FOR HER."

THEOPHILUS BULLFINCH was a bachelor, middle-aged, and sufficiently stout to look respectable. A spare man conveys a feeling of spareness in all things. The eye never rests so contentedly as on a fat, and what is generally termed a "comfortable-looking" personage; a stout man carries an appearance of wealth in the very folds of his coat, and so did Theophilus Bullfinch. But, alas! although temptation fell not in his way, he fell in the way of Mrs. Jennings!

"Time tells a tale,"—and we behold our bachelor located at a watering-place, no less famous for the civility and unimposing character of its inhabitants than the select nature of its visitors,—Margate. This, no one, we are sure, will venture to deny, who has "seasoned" it for three or four months. The kindly feelings of its inhabitants are perceptible *even in its ass-drivers.* Where will you find such *fatherly boys to their* donkeys—such yellow shoes—

such society as at Margate? We are sure our readers will say with us, nowhere!

Theophilus felt this; and ventured a trip, and a house, for he bought one, urged thereto by a lady acquaintance, by name Mrs. Palaver,—a lady who drove not only her husband, but a pair of ponies, and astonished the eyes both of "quality" and "natives" by the way she did the genteel—that is, as far as her ponies went; for herself, she had a soul above mean approbation. Among the "select" at the libraries, Mrs. P. was the ruling star; and, to judge not only from the redness of her face, but as her husband could testify, Mars in petticoats. She shilling-loo'd and "one-in-three'd," even to the hinderance of the "Concert;" but no one bore interruptions of this nature with so much philosophical sweetness as Old Bones, the proprietor; and as the "one-in-threes" bore to him a profit of three to one, the dulcet tones of the signora of the rooms were often eclipsed by Mrs. P.'s *shake* or "*go*," as it is called. Our readers may be curious as to the name of the "signora;" it was Mrs. Nobs by day, Signora Nobini by night. And such a voice! The little boys in Hawley Square heard as well as the company inside,—in fact rather better, for they complained of its being a *leetle* too forte.

But although Mrs. Palaver put down shillings, she *picked up* friends—dear souls of the newest importation—and among the rest Mrs. Jennings. Mrs. Jennings was a widow who "wanted somebody to care

for her." She had a small independence, and, if we may venture to judge from subsequent events, a *very* small independence; in fact, it might be doubted if it were an independence at all. She was tall, scraggy, and thin—we use a homely simile—as a pancake; the effect of grief, doubtless. She had lost a husband, she said, who doted on her; and, having lost so great a treasure, can we wonder at her unwearied exertions to obtain a fresh supply of affection? Theophilus was a man of money. Mrs. Jennings could not boast of the same golden fruit; and, as she "*wanted somebody to care for her*," she fixed her eye — a grey one—upon Theophilus Bullfinch.

"They met," not in a "crowd," but at a tea and card party, at the mutual friend's, Mrs. Palaver, where real eighteenpenny Cape, and diamond-cut sandwiches of the size and thinness of a three-cornered note, indicated the gentility of the lady of the house. Theophilus and the widow were partners, a beginning not to be despised. Mrs. Jennings looked confusion over her hand, and vowed her heart must fall to his king of clubs. Theophilus blushed; she sighed, and, intent upon a *new game*, lost the rubber! Theophilus paid for himself; the widow had a mind above trifles. Theophilus was tempted,—what man is not sometimes?—*and paid for* Mrs. Jennings. The first *stone was laid, and the* widow saw the church already *built, the door open*, and the parson's hand in the *same inviting position*. The next morning, Mrs.

Jennings, our bachelor, and the *mutual friend* were to perambulate the fields, or rather corn-fields, and numerous of the "quality" were drifting along the chalky roads on an equestrian tour; asses were at a premium, and young ladies' legs *going up*. Our party wended their way, and Mrs. J. talked of the days when she and Mr. J. made love in a corn-field. If she had only somebody *to care for her!*—and Mrs. Jennings squeezed something very like a tear into the corners of her eyes. We know not what effect they might have had on the dear departed, but to our bachelor they appeared the essence of affection,—pretty little drops, distilled from that great alembic, the heart. Theophilus, we have before hinted, was unused to the sweet witchery of womankind, and in the simplicity of his soul thought tears must be a natural production! Let not the wise in the lore of matrimony laugh at his ignorance,—Theophilus was a bachelor!

He was touched by this unexampled proof of, to him, affection; and, drawing himself into closer proximity with Mrs. Jennings than he had before ventured, began—

"My dear ma'am, don't distress yourself. Men are like ears of corn."

"I know it," cried Mrs. Jennings, twisting one round her finger as she spoke.

"*Like* grass, ma'am; and Time's scythe mows *down husbands* and fathers!"

"*Oh! oh!*" sobbed the widow.

"Is there anything I can do to comfort you, ma'am?" asked Theophilus inquiringly.

Mrs. Jennings looked assent, and kept twisting the ear of corn.

"A good wife, ma'am, is a jewel,—the tears are still in your eyes,—and will you allow me to make you an offer——"

"An offer!" said Mrs. Jennings; and the tears, spite of herself, shrunk back, as though ashamed of what they were doing,—"an offer!"

"Of my handkerchief," said Theophilus.

A clover-field is a dangerous thing to walk in. Philosophers may divine the cause,—we only know it is so; sentiment is not for the highway: love and clover are synonymous. Mrs. Jennings knew this, and trotted the unsuspecting, uninitiated Theophilus into one accordingly. Poppies, we know not why, do grow in clover; and Bullfinch—he was fond of botanising—plucked one, and, lamenting that violets were out of bloom, gave it to Mrs. Jennings. This was enough; and she whispered to the lady who was doing *thirdy*, "He must mean something."

The town residence of Theophilus Bullfinch was in one of the squares in the neighbourhood of the Museum. But what is a house if it want a woman's smile? So thought Mrs. Jennings, and she let no opportunity pass of "popping in." We are grieved *to say the popping* was all upon her side. She *would call as she* was passing—the day was so hot —*to take a rest;* or the day was so cold, and she

wanted—the truth must be spoken—a warm! What could Theophilus do? With a grim welcome on his face and a "D—n the woman!" in his heart, he grumbled out, "You'd better take a chair." Mrs. Jennings did, and anything else she could get. But getting was a point not easily arrived at; for if Bullfinch loved one thing more than another, it was himself. She would bring him, by way of treat, wrapped in the corner of her pocket handkerchief, five or six nice little ginger-cakes of her own making, of the size, and bearing a strong family likeness to what children call "sixes;" but finding all her entreaties thrown away, and her ginger-cakes likely to be in the same predicament, she would in the liberality of her soul take them into the kitchen by way of present to the housekeeper, who "pshaw'd!" as soon as her back was turned, and enlarging upon the merits of her own ginger-cakes, gave them to the maid, and she—they went no farther: servant-maids have good appetites.

What woman could bear these slights of fortune tamely? We can take upon ourselves to say Mrs. Jennings did not; but, intent upon the one great object of a woman's life,—a husband,—she let no opportunity pass of reporting that herself and Theophilus were shortly to be one, fully convinced of the fact that, though marriages may be made in heaven, *there is* nothing like speculating upon them on *earth;* and hoping, no doubt, to discover the true *philosopher's* stone, which "turneth all to gold

ilus was a man of wealth. She left no stone
ɔd to get him; and, to give things an appear-
ıe sat herself down—we tremble as we write
› less a place than his bedroom, determined
ɹuit it until, as she observed, "there was an
anding between them." Theophilus was
ıtricken, the housekeeper no less so, and the
-maid all flutters and ribbons.
! oh!" gasped the widow, "you base man!
ık woman as I am!"
ry!" grunted Theophilus.
housekeeper here interfered. "What 's the
ɪrying about it? Why don't you look after
ly else?"
!" sobbed the widow, "you don't know
atwixt us!"
ish the street-door was," thought Bullfinch.
lady was inexorable. "The poppy," she said,
ɔne the business! If she had only *some one*
'or her!" Her feelings overcame her, and
upon the bed in an agony of finely-developed
ɜ presume, for the convenience of fainting.
philus was at his wits' end, and a something
ɜ a "D—n me!" was at his tongue's; but,
g his wrath," and echoing the words of an
sultan, that "he who finds himself in a fire
› be resigned to the Divine will; but who-
ut of the fire ought to be careful, and keep
n his happy state." Thus far he thought
omet; so he put on his hat and sallied

forth, leaving Mrs. Jennings in undisputed possession of his bed. Whether this argued a want of taste, or was only a chastening of the spirit, we will not attempt to define; but certain it is he went out, and the widow, finding her efforts ineffectual, did the ditto.

Days passed, and so did Mrs. Jennings the house; the servant-maid, with a prudent industry, answering the door in the area. Bullfinch (in a money-getting lane in the City the curious reader will see the Co. written after it) was a merchant; and as, in the ordinary course of things, it is necessary to emerge into the streets previously to reaching the place "where merchants most do congregate," what was to be done?—for never did cat watch a rat-hole more patiently, more hungrily, than the widow the doorway of his house. His modesty was not widow-proof; and the only way to shun her was by a back-door, which opened into a mews. Patiently picking his way through mire and dirty straw, did Theophilus, cursing widows and poppies, wend his way; whilst she—patience had ceased to be a virtue—vowed vengeance in the streets.

On a wet day, a day of gloom and splash,—the streets running rivers, and the skies shedding drops like pebbles,—the passengers dripping, drenching,—and the New Police, all love and oilskin, sheltering *themselves* under doors and gateways,—sat Theophilus Bullfinch, Esq., in his easy chair, brightening the blaze of a warm fire by a fresh "stir," snuq

sipping his wine, and in the uprising of his heart wishing confusion to all widows, and devoting a full glass to the particular condemnation of Mrs. Jennings. Every now and then he cast an eye to the patting rain and floating streets, and thanked Heaven which had set the fruits of fortune ripened for his plucking, and given him that which made life like a full cup, that he could drink from, nor tire of. He sat in "contemplation sweet."

"Whence comes that knocking?" he might have said, had not the servant-maid saved him the trouble by saying a young man wanted to see him.

"Me!" ejaculated Theophilus.

"Yes, sir," was the reply; and, after much scrubbing on the door-mat, in a vain endeavour to rub his boots clean, the *young man* was shown up, soaked to the skin, and dripping like a watering-pot. Theophilus opened his eyes; the young man took the same liberty with his mouth, and inquired if his name was Bullfinch. The answer was in the affirmative. A chair was set; the servant left the room, and, looking at the muddy footsteps on the stair-carpets, uttered sundry pretty little sayings about "dirty feet," "her trouble in the morning," &c., and retailed her complaints to the goddess of the kitchen.

The young man commenced by saying he had *brought a little account.*

"And a great deal of wet," gently murmured *Theophilus.* "*A little* account!"

"Yes, sir,—for board and lodging."

Bullfinch opened his eyes still wider, and echoed, "Board and lodging!"

"The bill, sir, is four-and-twenty pounds."

Another echo, and still higher uplifting of the eyebrows: "Where do you come from?"

"Blackheath, sir."

"Blackheath! What! *through* the rain!"

The young man ventured a smile as he replied, "No, sir, I wish I had."

"Board and lodging!—you must have made a mistake."

"O no, sir," said the young man; "here is the bill,—twenty-four weeks, at a pound a week, as a parlour boarder, at Mrs. Twigg's establishment for young ladies."

Theophilus looked suspiciously at his silver spoons, and eyed the bell-rope. But a new light seemed to break upon him at the mention of the word, "establishment," as he replied—

"I am afraid, my good sir, the 'establishment' you come from is in St. George's Fields. I a parlour boarder at a young ladies' school!"

"No, sir; not *you*."

"Who then?" cried Theophilus.

"Mrs. Jennings, sir."

"Mrs. who?"

"*Jennings*, sir."

Bullfinch sunk back into his uneasy chair. "*Mrs. Jennings*!—Mrs. Devil!" and in the bitter

ness of his spleen he deemed her no less a personage. "Mrs. ——" The word, like Macbeth's *amen*, "stuck in his throat."

There was a pause. At length, plucking his courage by the ears, he continued: "And do you expect me to pay for this old —— ?" We omit the word; no lady admires being likened to a dog.

"If you please, sir; I have put 'paid' to the bill."

"That 's lucky, for it 's the only way you 'll ever have the satisfaction of seeing it 'paid.' Four-and-twenty pounds!—not so many farthings!" but the goodness of his disposition got the better of his anger as he added, "unless to buy her a rope."

It is needless to dwell longer upon this occurrence, further than by saying that the "young man," finding the bill not in a way of being "settled," or Mrs. Jennings either, took his beaver, or—we like to be particular—his four-and-ninepenny, no longer a hat, but a piece of ornamented brown paper in a fine state of decomposition, and was in the act of leaving the room, when rat! tat! tat! went the door, and another young man was announced with a bill for acceptance, drawn by Messrs. Lutestring & Co. for silks, flannels, &c., supplied to—Mrs. Jennings! Monsieur Tonson was nothing to this! Another knock, and a female was ushered up with a yard-long bill for millinery, &c., done for—Mrs. *Jennings! The "Storm"* upon the grand piano *was a mere puff to* that raised by Bullfinch. He *swore, raved, ordered* them from his house, and

finally, thrusting his head between his hands, groaned a bitter groan, and, smiting his brow, cried, "Oh, that d—d poppy!"

The following morning, a suspicious-looking person, of a pick-pockety exterior, and belonging to a similar industrious calling—he was a lawyer's clerk—knocked at the knocker of Theophilus Bullfinch, and with that gentlemanly ease and accomplished manner so peculiar to young men in the law, handed to the aforesaid personage a letter, prettily worded, and headed "Jennings *versus* Bullfinch." It was a notice of action for "breach."

Tremble, oh, ye bachelors!—and oh, ye spinsters! smirk in the hope of one day convincing the world you *ought* to have been married. Mrs. Jennings was of the same opinion, and, in a spirit of justice to her sex, put her case into the hands of Messrs. Twist and Strainer, as respectable a firm as ever undertook a "breach of promise case." It is needless to say they issued their processes with becoming expedition; and Bullfinch, sorely galled, mastered his antipathy—we cannot but think a very foolish one—and applied to an attorney!—in the hope—men catch at straws—that an attorney *might* be an honest man! Alas that a person of his years should not have more wisdom! It is perhaps necessary to inform the reader that the damages *were laid at* five thousand pounds.

The day of trial arrived. Theophilus, with a *blushing face* and tremulous heart, squeezed himself

beside his legal adviser; his eyes upon
nd his hands feelingly placed in his
e fancied all eyes bent on his, and
er them as though they were burning-
degrees his timidity abated, and at the
occasioned by the judge coming into court, had
summoned courage as to raise his eyes. They
"gently beaming," the eyes of Mrs. Jennings,
who was seated in the gallery. He would rather
looked on a wolf's; but a sort of fascination,
birds feel looking at serpents, kept them fixed—
nailed to the eyes of what seemed to him his evil
genius; whilst she, with the bland look of injured
innocence, jerked a few tears into her eyes, and,
taking out her pocket-handkerchief—a clean one for
the occasion—wept, that is, she appeared to do so;
but a woman's tears, like her ornaments, are not
always real.

She looked, and Bullfinch spell-bound met her
gaze; but, as a friend of ours once said, "He gave
her a look!"

The proceedings commenced. The learned
counsel opened the case by enlarging upon "the
enormity of the defendant's crime, and the plaintiff's
unprotected state; a crime," the learned counsel
went on to say, "unparalleled in the annals of the
law; a crime, my lord and gentlemen, which breaks
into the peace of families, and takes from the lovely
and the virtuous that jewel no wealth can barter—
reputation, gentlemen, her unspotted, her un-

blushing reputation! Not that I wo
stood to accuse the defendant of se
gentlemen; the lady whose case I a
too fair a flower to be hurt by his
breath!—she is——"

Here Theophilus uttered a word: we a
we cannot repeat it; but the officer of the
bawled "Silence!" in so loud a tone as
to drown it. The learned counsel continued:

"Yes, my lord and gentlemen, the defe
I blush, gentlemen, I blush," and the
counsel was evidently overcome with the
his situation,—"the defendant is a
resumed, "past the intoxicating meridian
when the feelings of youth flutter like bees
flowers of the fairest hue. He has proved
self——"

Another ejaculation from Theophilus, a
the officer "Silence'd!"

"He has proved himself a monster of the
dye,—a reptile who ought to be crushed off
of the earth! Oh, gentlemen, did you but
lady as I do,—have known the sanctit
private life, and the ethereal nature of
one; her loveliness, her virgin excellenc
by relations, idolised by her family!" The
in the gallery were visibly affected, and looke
daggers at the brute of a defendant. The couns
after a pause, resumed: "This, gentlemen, is

I am to plead. Englishmen will, I desert the ladies!"

[illegible]x felt the appeal, and looked proudly [illegible] after dwelling for two hours and three [illegible] on "the villain who by his insidious [illegible]"—Theophilus looked patiently unconscious of [illegible] on Juan accomplishments—"had wormed him- [illegible] into the lady's affections, and then basely left her, a daisy [illegible] the stalk, to pine!" he called upon them as husbands,—"Think of your wives," continued the counsel: they evidently did, and looked anything but pleased; and urging them as fathers and as men to give the plaintiff such damages as the enormity of the crime and the wealth of the defendant warranted, the learned counsel sat down, evidently to the satisfaction of himself and all who heard him.

It is needless to dwell longer upon this interesting trial, as the curiously inclined may read a full account of it in any newspaper of the date, and therein they will see it stated in evidence how the "mutual friend" bore witness to Mr. Bullfinch picking the poppy and paying for the widow at cards. Theophilus had often accused himself of the folly, and sundry other little *et ceteras* "too numerous to mention." The housekeeper, in being cross-examined, also bore evidence, though much against her will, to the intimacy of the parties. The maid—women invariably hold by each other—always con-

sidered master *'gaged* to Mrs. Jenni[illegible]gs. The [illegible] seemed to think so too, and returned a verdict [illegible] Theophilus never recovered the shock [illegible] five hundred pounds!

Ye elderly bachelors, and ye bachelors of all degrees, hear this and pause! There are specks in the sun; can you, in the vanity of your hearts, think women more immaculate? Alas, the error! Pause then, and, whenever you play at cards with a lady, think of Theophilus Bullfinch, and never play for your partner; and for the rest of your lives if you would escape actions for "breach," never gather poppies or walk in clover with widows!

"After all," said Theophilus, as he wrote a cheque for the amount of damages, and another for the costs, "even this is better than being bothered by Mrs. Jennings, especially as she wanted *somebody to care for her.*"

H. H.

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went out upon distant journeys, were so little known to the hostile strangers, that they ran but little chance of receiving injury at their hands, or even meeting with them. Such were the running-footmen of other days; but they are gone,—their *race* is ended,—and those who pride themselves upon their descent from the stock seem to have retained but few of the qualifications of their ancestors. Everything romantic and happy in Ireland seems to be dwindling away. No longer do we hear the pleasant announcements of 'Blind Connal the harper, sir,' and 'Miss Biddy Maquillian the fiddler, my lady,' and 'Dermot O'Dowd the piper, boys,' and——"

I just read so far in some work or other which I had carelessly taken up for a peep after dinner one day, when a loud knock at the door of my apartment made me close the book and say, "Come in!" The door slowly opened; but, as nobody entered, I demanded, "Who 's there?"

"It 's me, masther; Darby, yir honor."—"What do you want?" inquired I.—"Nothing, sir," said he; "but I 've got a letther for ye, sir."—"From whom?" said I.—"Faix, I don't know, sir," replied he, archly; "for I haven't read it yit; but here it is."—"Why don't you come in and give it to me?" demanded I.—"I 'm afraid, sir," said he, "*that my brogues* would dirty the carpet, and set *all the girls in the* kitchen a-laughing at me for

comin' into the drawin'-room; and sure a purtier room a man need never wish to come into."—"Oh! very well," said I, rising; "you shall have your way, Darby."—"Am I to wait for an answer, sir?" said he, giving me the letter.—"No," replied I; "I'll ring if it be necessary."—"Thank yir honor," said Darby, and turned to descend the stairs with the furtive caution of a cat when stealing upon its prey, lest he should make his brogues audible. A loud crash, succeeded by a louder laugh, through which I distinctly heard "*Merry bad look to yiz all!*" convinced me that Darby's coming upstairs with the letter was a contrivance of the other servants to play some trick upon him, which their merriment seemed to show had succeeded; but into which as I did not care to inquire, I sat down, opened my letter, and began to read. I had not proceeded far before I found it related to business of the most serious consequence, and required that I should write *instanter* to a friend, who was on a visit at Bally——, (nearly forty miles distant across the country,) and have an answer by immediate return of post. There was no time to be lost; so I wrote my letter as speedily as possible, folded, sealed, and directed it, then rang the bell with unusual impatience. It was promptly answered, but this time there was no knock at the door before it opened, for *it was Eileen*, my usual attendant, that presented *herself*, with a face whose natural health, cheerful-

ness, and rustic beauty were considerably heightened by the flush of recent merriment.

"What have you been doing with Darby, Eileen?" said I.—"*Oh, widdy-eelish!*" (her constant ejaculation), said she, laughing, "nothing at all, sir; only he said he wanted to see the drawin'-room, so we sent him up with the letter, and he slipped his foot as he came down, sir; that 's all."—"You know I don't like those tricks, Eileen," said I, with all the severity I could muster against her smothered laughter.—"No, sir; I know, sir; but when an *omadhaun* like that——"—"Silence!" said I. "I want to send a letter by the post: what o'clock is it?"—"Half an hour too late, sir," said Eileen, resuming her gravity; "and there 'll be no post to-morrow."—"No post to-morrow!" echoed I.—"No, sir; to-morrow 's Saturday, you know."—"Confusion!" said I, "it will be so indeed. What 's to be done?"—"I don't know, sir," replied Eileen despondingly; "how far is it?"—"Oh! nearly forty miles across the country," cried I; "and I want an answer immediately."—"Can't Darby *run* across with it?" said Eileen.—"*Run* across with it!" cried I; "is the girl out of her senses? Run across forty miles, as if it were nothing more than a hop-step-and-jump!"—"He 'll do it in that same, sir," said Eileen seriously, "if ye 'll only tell him what it *is.*"—"*Who 'll do it?*" cried I impatiently.—"Why, *Darby, sir,*" *said she*; "Darby in the kitchen, that 's

known all the country round for Darby the Swift." —"What!" cried I, "that fellow that brought me the letter just now? Impossible!"—"There 's nothing impossible to God, sir, you know,—glory be to his name!" said Eileen, "and so the *crathur* has the gift of it: he 'll do it, I warrant ye." I looked up in Eileen's face, and saw there was something beyond common opinion pleading for Darby; so, waiving all farther parley, I desired her to go downstairs and send him to me instantly. Eileen courtesied, and, retiring, shut the door; but immediately opened it again, saying, "You don't want him the night, sir, do ye? for," added she with a loud laugh, "I think he has broken his shin-bone." —"Send him to me immediately," said I peremptorily; upon which Eileen, exclaiming, "*Oh, widdy-eelish!*" made her exit.

Now, it was evident from her last words that Eileen, in conjunction with others, had done some injury to poor Darby in their gambols; but as he is just coming upstairs, and will make a long pause before he presumes to knock at the door a second time, allow me, gentle reader, *ad interim*, to present you with a portrait of my servant, or follower, "DARBY RYAN," nicknamed "*The Swift.*"

Darby Ryan was about thirty years of age, middle-sized, not over stout, and tolerably well made. His hair, both in texture and tint, resembled the raddled back of a fawn-coloured goat, and waved in shaggy

luxuriance everywhere save on his forehead, in the middle of which it timidly descended in a close-cropped peak, till it nearly united itself with two enormous dark-coloured eyebrows. His eyes were small, and the blackest I have ever seen, with a gleam of fire occasionally, that lent them more archness than ferocity. Some thought he squinted, and said that, though under *one* master's direction, his *two pupils* went contrary ways; but I believe this was all slander, and only set forth by jealous people, who themselves, it is said, are rather queer in their optics. A *fracas* in a hurling-match had left his nose little more than a one-arched bridge, by which, if you please, we will pass along to his mouth, where, if I had the time, I could find ample *room* for *rumi*nation, &c. But Darby has knocked at my door, and I am forced to say, "Come in!"—"Did yir honor want me, sir? or is it only the *caileen's* fun, and the rest of them, in the kitchen?" said Darby, opening the door, but remaining outside as before. "Come in," said I encouragingly, "and take a seat for a moment; I 'll tell you what I want with you." The girl's fears for the carpet were quite right; for Darby, making a bow to me on his entrance, scraped about a pound of mud off his brogues, which would have discomfited him quite if I had not proceeded with, "Do you know the road *to Bally——? Can* you find your way to it safely, *Darby?*"

"Can a duck swim, yir honor?" said Darby, emboldened by degrees.

"Oh! very well, I understand you," said I. "Now, mark me: I want you to take this letter to a friend of mine, who is on a visit with the clergyman there, and bring me an answer as speedily as possible. Are you so quick-footed as they say?"

"Quick-*futted!*" said Darby, seating himself on the very corner of the nearest chair; "where there's a will there's a way, as the sayin' is; but I was never counted slow anyhows but oncet, and that was when I made the clock stop of its own accord on a Patrick's day, and sure, when we broke up our party, we found it was two days afterwards."

"Well, take care and be more sparing of your time for the present," said I, anxious to dispatch him.

"You may rely on it, sir," said he; "I 'll spare *nather* time nor trouble in the doin' of it, although it is letter-carryin'."

"Letter-carrying!" said I; "and pray what is there disgraceful in the calling?"

"Oh! nothing at all disgraceful in the *calling*, sir," said Darby, "as yir honor says, but quite the reverse, if the letters are not paid aforehand."

"You would not surely appropriate the postage to yourself?" said I, looking severely, though I did *not exactly* comprehend him.

"*Is it me*, sir?—Poperiate the king's pocket

money in that way, poor ould gentleman! I 'm not in parliament yet, nor ever had a fine situation under government, like yir honor."

"Be not impertinent, sir," said I sharply; "I 'd have you know and keep your distance." Darby rose immediately from the chair, of which about this time he had occupied nearly one-half, saying,

"Any distance you like for a short time, sir; for it 's myself would grieve to part you for ever. What 's the word of command, sir, and I 'm off?—Right or left, north or south, Darby Ryan 's yir man 'gainst wind or tide, as was said of one of my posteriors——"

"Your ancestors you mean," said I, smiling.

"My *aunt's sisters*, yir honor! Faith and he wasn't one of her *sisters*, nor one of my *four* fathers either,—for he was neither my godfather, nor my own father, nor my grandfather, nor my great-grandfather; but, as I said afore, one of my pos—pos—pos—*terity*, (I have the word now, divil take it!) that was christened RYAN THE RACER, for bein' runnin' futtman ages ago to the first quality in the country."

By this time I began to perceive that, however quick Darby's heels might be, they had a formidable rival in his tongue; so I endeavoured to check *it* at once by saying, "I have no time now to attend to *any stories about* your ancestry or relations; I *merely wish to know* can you take this letter to its

direction, and speedily bring me an answer to it: in a word, can you set out immediately, and travel all night?"—"All night, yir honor! is it all night that 's in yir mind?" said Darby, evidently hurt at my inquiry. "Gog's blud!" he continued, half apart, "I was never taken for a turkey afore."—"A turkey!" said I, quite at a loss to understand him.—"Yes, yir honor," said Darby, "a turkey—the very worst *baste* on the road for a long stretch (barrin' his neck) that ever was christened! Did yir honor ever hear of the wager 'tween the goose and him?"—"Never," said I sullenly.—"Then I 'm glad of it, masther," said Darby rejoicingly, "for it gives me the pleasure of tellin' it to yir honor. You see, sir, that oncet upon a time there was an ould cock-turkey——"—"Cock and a bull!" said I, losing all patience: "go downstairs! I don't want you at all."—"No, sir; I know you don't, sir," said Darby, with most provoking perseverance; "but I thought ye 'd like to hear how an ould gander sarved the bull-turkey, big as he was."—"Well, then," said I in despair, "go on."—"Thank ye, sir," said Darby, and then continued, while I from time to time anxiously looked at my watch, stirred the fire, or fidgeted myself in twenty different ways, in the hope of interrupting him; but all to no purpose. "Then you see, sir, oncet upon a time an ould cock-*turkey lived* in the barony of Brawny, or, let me *see, was it* in Incheboſin or Tubbercleer?—faix!

an' it 's myself forgets that same at the present writin',—but Jim Gurn—you know Jim Gurn, yir honor, Jim Gurn the nailer that lives hard by,—him that fought his black and tan t'other day 'gainst Tim Fagan's silver hackle,—oh! Jim is the boy that 'll tell ye the *ins* and *outs* of it any day yir honor wud pay him a visit, 'caze Jim 's in the way of it. Well, as I was relatin', the turkey was a parson's bird, and as proud as Lucifer, bein' used to the best of livin'; while the gander was only a poor *commoner*, for he was a *Roman*, and *oblidged* to live upon what he could get by the road-side. These two fowls, yir honor, never could agree anyhow,—never could put up their horses together on any blessed p'int,—till one day a big row happened betwune them, when the gander challenged the turkey to a steeple-chase across the country, day and dark, for twenty-four hours. Well, to my surprise,—though I wasn't there at the time, but Jim Gurn was, who gave me the whole history,—to my surprise, the turkey didn't say *no* to it, but was quite agreeable all of a suddent; so away they started from Jim Gurn's dunghill one Sunday after mass, for the gander wouldn't stir a step afore prayers. Well, to be sure, to give the divil his due, the turkey took the lead in fine style, and was soon clane out of sight; but the gander kept movin' on, *no ways downhearted*, after him. About nightfall *it was his business* to pass through an ould archway

acrass the road; and as he was stoopin' his head to get under it,—for yir honor knows a gander will stoop his head under a doorway if it was only as high as the moon,—who should he see comfortably sated in an ivy bush but the turkey himself, tucked in for the night. The gander, winkin' to himself, says, 'Is it there ye are, honey?'—but he kept never mindin' him for all that, but only walked bouldly on to his journey's end, where he arrived safe and sound next day, afore the turkey was out of his first sleep: 'caze why, ye see, sir, a goose or a gander will travel all night; but in respect of a turkey, once the day falls in, divil another inch of ground he 'll put his futt to, barrin' it 's to roost in a tree or the rafters of a cow-house! Oh! maybe the parson's bird wasn't ashamed of himself! Jim Gurn says he never held his head up afterward, though to be sure he hadn't long to fret, for Christmas was nigh at hand, and he had to stand sentry by the kitchen fire one day without his body-clothes till he could bear it no longer; so they *dished* him *intirely*. *Them* that *ett* him said he was as tough as leather, no doubt from the grief: but, divil's cure to him! what bisness had he to be so proud of himself, the spalpeen?"

Darby *at length* came to a pause. I paused also for a minute to understand the application of his *anecdote;* but it was evident: he wished to impress *me by his* parable that he was fitted for the task I

had allotted him; so I inquired what money he would want on the road.

"Maybe yir honor wouldn't think half-a-crown too much?" said he diffidently.

"Half-a-crown!" exclaimed I, amazed at the modesty of his demand: "here are ten shillings; and, if you be quick in your errand, I will give you something extra on your return."

"Musha, an' long life to yir honor!" said Darby, scraping the carpet again; "may the grass never grow on the pathway to yir dwellin', nor a baste or Christian ever die belongin' t'ye, barrin' it 's for the use of the kitchen!"

"Well, now prepare for the road," said I impatiently, "and be off at once."

"An' that I will, sir, in the twinklin' of a bedstead; only, you see, I 've just got to run up to Tim Fallon the barber's to take the stubble off of my chin. Tim—(you know Tim Fallon, yir honor)—Tim won't keep me long, anyhow, for it 's late in the day, and his tongue must be dry by this; but if ye wud hear him of a mornin', oh! it 's a *trate*, for Tim was once a play-acthur afore he grew a barber, an' by that same a good barber he is. Did he ever *lather* yir honor?"—I made no reply. "After that," continued Darby, "I 'll just step home and put on my Sunday clothes, and then won't I be as *fresh as a two-year ould* to do yir honor's biddin'!"

"*Well, well, lose no time*," said I impatiently.

"Sorrow a minute," said Darby; "I 'll be there and back agin in the shoot of a wishin' star. Maybe yir honor knows what a wishin' star is?"—I shook my head. "Well, then," continued Darby, "yir honor, no doubt, has been out o' doors of a fine starlight night?"—I nodded assent. "Well then, agin, I 'll tell ye what a wishin' star is. Did ye ever sit yir heart upon havin' of anything, sir?"—"Yes," said I morosely.—"Might I be so bould as to ax in regard to what, sir?" inquired Darby.—"Why, in regard, as you call it, to the letter I have given you just now," replied I; "I wish to have it delivered as quickly as possible."

"Oh! that bein' the case, sir," said Darby, somewhat disconcerted, "I 'm off at once."—"At once be it, then," said I, opening the door for him.—'I 've only, then, to give the letther, sir," said he lingeringly, "to the gentleman at the clargy's? But ye didn't tell me whether it was the priest or the parson he 's stoppin' with."—"The parson," said I, with all the patience I could command.—"Oh, very well, sir. God take care of ye till I come back!" So saying, he shut the door after him; but, before I could seat myself in my chair, he opened it again, inquiring "if he left his hat in the drawin'-room?" The only answer I made was by taking up the caubeen, which lay on the carpet, and flinging it in his face, out of all patience. "Thank yir honor," said Darby, and

retired again, as I hoped, to proceed on his journey. But, alas! I was mistaken. Five minutes had scarcely elapsed when he presented himself once more, with a request that I might allow him to take *Squib*, my pointer dog, with him as a companion. "The road 's so drary," said he, "by one's self, you know, yir honor."—"Well, take him, in God's name," said I, hastily shutting the door after him, and glad to be rid of him at any concession.

I again resumed my seat, and opened the volume I had been reading; but I had not got through more than twenty or thirty pages of marvellous matter, when I thought I heard Darby's voice in the yard. On going to the window, I found that it was indeed *he*, and "*as spruce as a Scotch fir*," to use one of his own expressions.

"Not gone yet!" exclaimed I, furiously throwing up the sash. But it was of no use, for he replied with the most perfect coolness, "O, yes, sir, I *was* gone half an hour ago; only, you see, I 've come back for the *clieve* that 's to carry *Squib* to the place where he 'll find divarsion in runnin' about in the pleasure-grounds hard by Squire Markhim's inclosure; 'twould kill the baste (God pard'n me for callin' him so, for he 's more like a Christian) to walk him so far: and maybe I 'll not bring ye home a brace or two of birds that he 'll point at without seein', *and a blue pater* or so, if yir honor wud only *just give me a charge* or two of powder and shot."

"Do you wish to get into the hands of the police?" said I.

"Ah, then, is it the Peelers," said Darby contemptuously, "that yir honor manes? Divil a one o' them will be out of his *flay*-park by the time I 'm crassing the *Callas* with Squib and Pat Fagan's ould carbine, that he 'll lend me out o' the bog-hole, where he keeps it from the rust and the gaugers: and sure, while we 're oilin' it with a bit of goose-grase, that it mayn't burst intirely the first goin' off, I can have a bit of gossip with the ould woman in the chimly corner over the *greeshah*, and find out everything about the gintleman in the neighb'rhood that I 'm takin' the letther to; for poor Katty Fagan, ever since she lost the brindled heifer, and young Jemmeen her grandson, that they cut out for a priest, and another calf that she won at a weddin' raffle, all in the typhus sason,—you recollect the typhus, yir honor?"

"Oh, curse you and the typhus together!" said I.

"Well, an' it 's myself that never could spake a good word for it either, masther, bad look to 't!" said Darby: "but, be that as it may, ever since that time Katty knows more of every other body's bisness nor her own; so I 'll lose nothin' by callin' to ax her how she is at laste, thov' it is a mile or two out o' my way."

By this time, reader, you may conclude my power of endurance was pretty nigh exhausted; so, taking

down a pair of pistols that hung over the fireplace, I said, "The only powder and shot, my good fellow, that I can spare you at present are contained in these two barrels; you are welcome to them, and shall have them on the spot, if you do not depart immediately!"

"Ah! then it's myself that wud *depart* imma-diately, sure enough, sir," said Darby, "if yir honor wud only pull the trigger; but keep yir hands off o' them, masther avick, for, charge or no charge, they might go aff and spile my beauty for ever: the divil, they say, can fire an empty charge as well as a full one!"

"Well, then," said I, "take your choice: *go off* this moment, or one of these shall!"

"Oh, then, sure that's no choice at all, at all, sir," replied Darby; "so I suppose I must go my ways. Well, then, wid ye be wid ye, for I can't always be wid ye. Is there anything else I can do for ye, sir, on the road?"

"Nothing," said I: "begone!"

"Thank ye, sir," said he, and retired.

"Thank Heaven!" said I, "the fellow has at last set out on his journey." So I again turned to the marvellous volume, and was about half way through the pedestrian exploits of Collier and his sister, who, to use the words of the writer, "thought nothing of *putting* a pot of *pink-eyes* down to boil, *and stepping to the* next market-town (about nine

miles distant) for a halfpennyworth of salt (returning too, again) before the white horses were on the praties," when Eileen presented herself in such a convulsion of laughter that it was some moments before she could reply to my question of "What 's the matter?" At length, terminating with a long-drawn sigh, and her usual "*widdy-eelish*," she replied, "Nothing 's the matter, sir; only—only—" (laughing again)—"only Darby, sir."

"Darby!" exclaimed I; "what of *him?*"

"He wants to know, sir," said she, "if you will allow him to take a *horse* with him."

"A *horse!*" exclaimed I; "devil take the fellow! what does he mean?"

"Why, I mane, to be sure," said Darby from the bottom of the stairs, at the same time at the top of his voice, "a *horse* from the young ash-plants in the ould garden. I 'll cut the crookedest I can find, though a straight one would do me betther."

"What is it he wants?" said I, turning to Eileen, who was in a perfect *kink* of laughter.

"*Oh, widdy-eelish!*" replied she, "I suppose the cr*a*ther means a pole to help him over the bogs."

"Let me talk to the rascal myself," said I, going to the door in a deuce of a rage.

"Yir sarvant, sir," said Darby, taking his hat off, and making a scrape that cost *him* his equilibrium, *and me* my gravity, for I could not but sympathise *with Eileen's* outrageous laughter.

"Is it possible that you are here yet?" inquired I, endeavouring to be as severe as possible.

"Oh, never fear, sir, but I'll be off presently," said he; "my walk 's waitin' for me on the road; I'll overtake it imm*a*diately."

"I 'm sorry that you have undertaken it at all," said I in a tone of unusual displeasure.

"Undertaken, sir! undertake—undertaker!" said Darby rather indignantly; "I never was an undertaker but oncet, and that was at my ould father's funeral, when I was one of the nine bearers. That was a beautiful sight to be sure," said he, kindling into rapture as he proceeded. "Ah! that was the beautiful sight, agrah! I seen many a lord's berrin', but none to come up to that. Oh! it would do any one's heart good to see us walkin' in *possession* to the Abbey,—it was so d*a*cent, and all of a piece, like a magpie, white and black from beginnin' to end! Oh! it was a beautiful sight, anyhow," added he with a deep sigh.

"Did you, then, rejoice in your father's death?" said I harshly.

"Why, not exactly rejoice in his death," replied Darby, wiping away a tear from his already suffused eye, "for he was a kind ould body to them he liked, though he didn't spake to me good or bad for three years afore he died: but never mind; maybe I *wasn't hearty at his* wake!"

"*At his wake!*" said I, with a look of disgust.

"Yes, yir honor!" replied he, after a pause of surprise,—"at his wake to be sure; and where can a body be so alive to fun of all sorts as at a well-conducted dead body's wake? Isn't there smokin', and drinkin', and story-tellin', and now and then a bit of dancin' in the other room with the young ones, to shake off the grief, eh? And didn't I get seven goold guineas from 'Turney Gubbins, that was one of his exec*u*tors, and the ould mare that used to take him from town to town when he took to *fair* bisness, and the bracket hen that lays yir honor's eggs now, that was the mother of all the p*a*ceable fightin' cocks in the county; and, moreover, his white waistcoat and breeches when he was in the Yeomen, that Ned Fallon, the tailor, says he 'll dye any day for me into a second mournin'?"

"And what did you with the seven guineas?" said I; "did you turn them to any account?"

"Oh, the Lord bless yir honor!" said Darby sheepishly; "it 's very hard to know what to do with a large sum of money now-a-days: it 's dangerous keepin' by you, you know, sir; so *I put it out to interest!*"

"And pray what security did you get?" said I, suspecting something, from the fellow's roguish leer.

"Security, sir?" said Darby; "they tould me it *was collatheral*, I think, yir honor; c*ollatheral* was *the* word."

"*Collateral!*" said I, somewhat surprised at his knowledge of the term.

"Yes, sir," replied he, scratching his head with one hand, and thrusting the other into his breeches pocket, "*I laid it out in* HOUSES. But, for all that, half an hour afore I die, I 'll have as much money as 'll do me all the days o' my life!"

I could not but smile at the fellow's satirical humour upon his own folly; and, as it was the first time I had ever admitted him to such familiar converse, I patiently listened while he continued to tell me how he "ran through his fortune" in less than three weeks; hoping, however, that he would soon make an end of his recital, and set out with my letter, for the day now began to decline.

"You see, yir honor, this was the way it happened," said Darby. "*Nawthin'* would save me but I should give a TAY-PARTY at the 'Three Blacks' one evenin' after a hurlin'-match. Did yir honor ever hurl a bit? Oh, then, sure it 's the finest, divarsion that any one cud sit his mind upon, barrin' it doesn't ind in a row, as mostly for the best part it does. But never mind that, it 's fine fun, anyhow; though by it I *did* get this *clink* on the nose, that made me lave off snuff-takin' ever since as a dirty habit! Oh! a hurlin'-match is a grate sight, and many a good clargy I 've seen strip *to the work. There* was Father M'Gauvran—yir *honor has heard of* Father M'Gauvran, that got a

son an' heir for Pat Mac Gavany, by givin' his wife an ould *surplus* that he had by him for some time? Oh! it would raise the cockles of yir heart to see how he *wud* whip a ball along. He was a *grate* hurler, anyhow; *he* was the boy at the *bawke!*"

Conceiving that Darby would not terminate before midnight (if he ever would at all), I interrupted him, saying, "When you return, I shall be very happy to hear the particulars of your TAY-PARTY, but for the present I must decline the narrative. Set out, if you mean to go: when you come back, I will listen very attentively to the whole recital."

"Oh, then, I suppose I 'm tiring yir honor! But stop a bit,—I 'll be here in the turn of a snipe;" saying which, he disappeared. I had not been long left to my own reflections before he came upstairs, and, without any of his previous knocks and delays, he entered my room hurriedly, and, throwing down a small book on the table before me, said, "There, sir; I hope *that* will amuse you while I am away: it 's an account of my *tay-party*, by *Lame* Kelly the poet, that wudn't get drunk that night *acause* he sed he wud write it afore his next sleep. Read it, masther," said Darby; "and never mind the jokes upon me."—"Go your ways," said I.—"I 've only *one* way to go, sir," said Darby.—"Well, then," said *I*, "*in* God's name take that."—"In God's name be *it, then,*" replied Darby, and ultimately left me.

CHAPTER II.

"Aspettar' e non venire!"

THE Sunday after Darby *lingeringly* started, I began to think it would be just as well to make "assurance doubly sure;" so I dispatched a letter by post to my friend at Bally——, conveying similar instructions and advice to those contained in that intrusted to "*the running footman*" of my establishment. In three days I received a satisfactory answer, so I was at rest upon that point; but, as to Darby, I was quite at a loss. I turned over and over in my mind the various mishaps that might have befallen him by the way; but all to no purpose. I called up Eileen, and asked her what she thought about it. Her replies, mixed up, as they were, with her wild immoderate laughter, afforded me nothing beyond a sympathy with her mirth, which certainly was most infective. Reader, I am not a portrait-painter; but, nevertheless, I will attempt to give you an outline of Eileen. In the first place, she was a poor girl (else she would not have been *my* servant), born of honest parents; but, if fate had placed her in a higher sphere, she had natural accomplishments enough to have graced it—namely, youth, beauty, and health and, beyond these, an intellectual, though uneducated, refinement of thought, when, *by chance*, she was serious; *for gaiety seemed to be* an indispensable element of

her being. She was eighteen years of age—well, what do I say?—beautifully formed, had eyes like violets, cheeks like roses, hair, when it was dishevelled (despite Goldsmith's satire), like a weeping willow in a sunset, and—but, hold! I must not go further, lest I be suspected of being enamoured of the original; so I will give up the remaining parts of the picture, and leave them to your imagination.

The Friday after Darby's setting out I was sitting in my room, very quietly poring over something or other of no importance,—I forget exactly what, but I think it was some speech in the House of Lords, —when a knock at the door agreeably disturbed me from an incipient somnolency, occasioned by a new and unprofitable line of reading.

"Come in!" said I. "Who is it? and what do you want?"

"It's only *me*, sir," said Eileen, laughing, as usual. "There's a crather below that wants to speak to you, sir."

"Who is it?" said I.

"I don't well know, sir," replied she; "but I think he's some relation to poor Darby, that ye sent to Bally—— last Friday afternoon."

"Oh, then, send him up; he may account in some way for the extraordinary absence of his relative," said I.

"Sure, an' it's myself, an' no relation at all," *shouted* Darby from below indignantly.

"*Oh! widdy-eelish!*" cried Eileen, breaking out into her hearty wild laugh, that was sure to set at defiance anything like gravity.

"Come up, Darby," said I. "I thought we should never have seen you again."

"Troth, an' the same thing came into my head more than oncet, masther. What the divil are ye laughin' at, honey?" said he (entering the room) to Eileen, who still continued her most boisterous mirth."

"Go downstairs, Evelina," said I, "and leave Darby and me alone."

She did so; but whispered something in his ear as she passed, which made him so furious that I thought he would have knocked her down, had she not adroitly escaped him by shutting the door after her, and holding the handle on the outside so tightly that his efforts to open it and follow her were abandoned in a moment as fruitless.

"What is the meaning of all this?" said I severely. "Did you mean to strike the girl?"

"Strike the *caileen*, yir honor? Oh, the Lord forbid! but, if I cotch her upon the stairs out o' yir honor's sight, maybe I wudn't give her cherry lips a *pogue* (yir honor knows what a *pogue* is) that wud drive her sweetheart crazy for a month o' Sundays!"

"Where have you been all this while?" inquired I, not willing to notice his speech.

"*Oh, then, sure,*" said he, in a most mournful *tone, "masther, I* 've had the divil's own time of it,

sir, since you were so unfortunate as to part with me, yir honor, on that same journey to Bally—Bally—Bally—bad luck to it! what do they call it?"

"What has happened?" inquired I anxiously, thinking he might have later news than my post-letter of three days before had conveyed.

"Happened, yir honor! to who?" said Darby, with a wild look of concern. "I hope the family, Christians, bastes, and all, not barrin' the pig that had the measles, are in good health, and well to do as when I left them. Has the bracket hin taken to standin' upon one leg yit, sir, since she lost the other through that baste of a bull-dog belongin' to the parson? I 'd lay three of her eggs she 'll never forget the affront he put upon her then!"

"We are all well here," said I; "but give me some account of what has befallen you on your journey, that delayed you so long."

"Troth, an' I 'll tell ye, masther," replied Darby, "in no time. Have ye five minutes to spare, sir?"

"Yes," said I; "let me hear."

"Well, then, sir," commenced he, "you may remimber that it was on a Friday you took *lave* of me—last Friday of all—Friday was never a *looky* day by *say* or by land: ye see, I didn't go far afore I met with a disappointment, for I met a berrin' *comin'* right *forenenst* me—what could I do but turn *back*, in dacency, with it?—and, after I 'd keen'd

about a-mile with the mourners, I made bould to ax who was the body that was makin' a blackberry *ov* himself."

"A blackberry!" interrupted I.

"Yes, yir honor, a blackberry," replied Darby: "do ye know that, let it shoot never so far, it's sure to come back as near as it can to the root of it where it first started; and so arn't we all blackberries? As the priest says on Ash-*Wendsday*, 'Remember, man, you are but dust, and into dust you must return.' Now, I've known bigger *dusts* in their lifetime than they were turned out of afterward, when they took to studyin' astron*a*my with

> 'The tops of their toes,
> And the tip of their nose,
> Turn'd up to the roots of the daisies!'

But whose berrin' should it be, after all, but ould Jemmy Cullen, the piper's! Ye know Jemmy Cullen, yir honor? him that used to play the organ on the pipes at high-mass durin' Christmas an' Easter. Oh! he was the boy to lilt at a weddin' or a wake! but, p*a*ce be width 'im—God rest his sowl! as I said when I saw the *scragh* put over him for the first time. Well, ye know, yir honor, that oncet upon the same road width them I coudn't do more nor less than wet our clay together; so, after walkin' the corpse three times round the churchyard of *Glassin-oge*—— Were ye ever berried there, sir? —*I mane, wud ye like to* be berried there, sir?"

"Not just yet," said I.

"Oh, the Lord forbid, sir!" cried Darby. "I didn't mane that, by no manes. God send ye many days, and *prosprous* ones too! But there 's a taste in chusin' a berrin'-ground as well as there is in a drawin'-room," said he, looking around him.

"So there may be," said I; "but that is only the whim or notion of a living man. When he dies, all churchyards are the same to him; he then can have no considerations about the matter."

"That 's all very true, sir," replied Darby; "but would ye like to be burnt after the breath was out o' ye?"

"I could have neither liking nor disliking," answered I; "for I should be an insensible mass of matter."

"But mightn't yir ghost, sir, like to see ye were comfortably provided for? I mane yir honor's dead body that 's alive an' in good health now, an' long may it continue so!"

"Oh! never mind," said I; "neither you nor I, Darby, know much about those things; so go on with your story."

"Thank ye, sir!" said Darby, and resumed. "I was sayin', sir, as how we went to wet our clay together at the '*Three Jolly Pigeons.*' Yir honor knows the 'Three Jolly Pigeons,' facing the ould *haw*thorn o' Goldsmith, in the village of Auburn *hard* by here, eh? Sure, an' I've heer'd as much

as how they want to take the merits of the whole place to themselves over in England somewhere, as if it couldn't spake plainly for itself that it was bred and born here in ould Ireland ages ago! Isn't the '*Desarted Village*' a b*u*tiful histhory, masther? Lame Kelly, the poet, says it b*a*tes the world for makin' the heart soft. It 's myself that never passes the spot without a tear in my eye, like a widow's pig, as the sayin' is. There 's the ruins of the d*a*cent church on the hill all in b*u*tiful repair to this hour, and the parson's house, and the schoolmaster Tom Allen's, and the common, and the pond, width the geese upon it still, as if it was only yistherday, an' the ould hawthorn—bad *look* to their taste that built a stone wall round about it like a *jail!* What did the blessed tree ever do that it should be put in pound in that manner o' way?"

Gentle shade of GOLDSMITH! amongst the many tributes to thy immortal genius, receive kindly the simple but honest homage of poor Darby. He may not be able to appreciate thee in all thy varied splendour of moral and intellectual worth; but he has a heart full of benevolence like thine own, and, although a poor Irish serf, has feeling and fancy enough to reverence the spots thou hast consecrated by the thousand-spelled wand of thy muse!

"Darby," said I, "I promised you something on your return *(though you did not come back as soon as I expected); there 's* a guinea for you."

"Augh, thin, may the light of heaven break yir last sleep!" said Darby; "but isn't it too much, masther?"

"You are welcome to it," said I; "go on with your story."

"Thank ye, sir!" replied he. "Whereabouts was I when I left off?"

"Just where you are now," said I.

"Beggin' yir honor's pardon, I think I was at the 'Three Jolly Pigeons.'"

"Be it so," said I; "go on."

"Well, as I was sayin', when we damp'd the grief a trifle at the *sheebeen* width a drop of the rale *stone turf*, I takes up the kish again; but first I put my hand in the straw to see if the *dog-een* was comfortable, and there he was to be sure, warm an' nice as a new-laid egg: so, wishin' the rest of the company every amusement in life, I set out on my travels agen. Just as I was in the doorway, Ned Coffey, the *whisperer*,—ye know Ned Coffey, yir honor, that brakes in the wild *coults* width a charm he 's got? Well, anyhow, if he didn't laugh so as if his mother was a horse; but I never minded him, only went on wonderin' to myself what cud av' made him so humorsome at a berrin'. Well, never mind that, I went on beautifully for a time, as good as an hour an' a half, when, all of a suddent, leppin' a ditch, the *hayband* I had acrass my breast bruk, and let the *clieve* fall *clane* in the dirty puddle. 'Oh, hanna-

mandhioul!' says I, 'what 'll the masther say to this?' The words were scarce past my lips when a *quake* that 'ud av' split the ears of a pitcher came out o' the *clieve*, an' after that a gruntin', such as I never *heer'd* come from mortal man afore, barrin' it was a pig under a gate!"

"What could it have been?" inquired I, affecting a grave concern; "it was not my dog Squib, surely?"

"Who the *nagers* else could it be?" said Darby. "Only, after crassing myself three times, and turnin' up the basket wid my *horse*, I found he was bewitched into the shape of a porker, as purty a young pig sure enough, about seven weeks ould, as I 'd wish to clap eyes on."

"A pig!" exclaimed I. "Why, he returned home that very night in his own shape."

"Well, then, see that, now," said Darby, "thuv', for my own part, I think it was all Ned Coffey's doin'; but, be that as it may, I was never so frightened in all my born days, for I tuk to my heels, an' was out o' sight in no time, like a *haro!* though I hadn't far to go to be that same, for it was pitch-dark; so, to keep myself company, I began singin'—

'The first o' my pranks was in little Rathshane,
Where love, *just* like whiskey, popp'd into my brain;
For Ally Magoolagh, a *nate* little sowl,
As tall and as strate as a shaverman's pole!'

'Augh! thin, *was* she?' says a voice that I cudn't see, though 'twas close to my left ear! 'Who's there?' says I. 'Where?' says it, on th' other side. 'Anywhere,' says I, 'to plaze ye;' and wid that I fell into a could sweat, for I began to think it was Mihilmas Eve, an' divil a grain of salt I had about me to keep me from harm! 'Crass o' Christ on us!' says I, 'an' God bless ye!' for I thought it was one of the good people, yir honor! so I made up my mind to get in*doors* as soon as I could. But that wasn't so aisy as wishin', for there wasn't a village nearer than five miles, nor a cabin by the wayside. At last I spies a light at a distance in the fields aff the road, and away we set, I and my *horse*, full gallup. Oh! many 's the ditch we cleared without seein'; but still, never a bit did we come nearer to the light! 'Is it a *Will*,' says I to myself, 'or a *Jack?*' an' wid that out it goes on a suddent, and l*a*ves me up to my chin in a bog. Augh! then, hadn't I a cruel time of it there? I was, for all the world, like a *flay* on Father Fogarty's pock-mark'd nose, or a blind horse in a tan-yard,—no sooner out o' one hole than into another! At last I got upon dry land, and wasn't I thankful for that same? for I got hoult ov a stone wall that directed me straight on to a gate that was only hasp'd; so I opened it, an' let myself out upon a *rodeiene*, that I knew by the tracks o' the wheels; so, turnin' myself round *three* times for l*o*ok (and bad look it was), I steps

out into a ditch that was handy by the wayside,—for it was acrass the *rodeiene* I went 'stead of lengthways either up or down; but how could I do betther in the dark? Well, afther a while floundherin' about like a litther of pups in a bag, I got on my feet agen clane out o' the mud, shiverin' an' shakin' as if I had Jack Nulty's ague 'pon me! 'Well,' says I to myself, 'it was *looky* I stopp'd to have a drop at the berrin', or I 'd av' nothin' to keep the could out o' me now! It was Providence as well as dacency that put it into my head!"

"If you had not stopped," said I, "you would not have been overtaken by the night, and exposed to such a disagreeable accident."

"Well, sure, yir honor," replied Darby, "somethin' else might av' happened, an' who knows but it might 'a been worse? — there 's no sayin' or accountin' for such things. Well, be that as it may, I began to walk on, feelin' afore me width my *horse* (that never forsook me all the time) whether I was in the right road or not, till at last I comes all ov a suddent into the middle o' the town o' Lanesbro', with *raal* candles (none ov yir *wisps* or *lantherns*) burnin' in every window. Maybe I didn't know where I was then! So, mountin' my horse, sir, strad-legs, away I *canther'd*, blessin' my stars that I got on my journey so well and so far, width only a wettin' *in the bog-holes* an' ditches, and a scratch or *two on my hands* an' cheeks, that I made nothin' ov.

'Where will we put up for the night?' says I to my horse; but yir honor knows the *crathur* cudn't answer me; so I tuk my own advice, an' went sthraight to 'The Cat and Bagpipes.' 'Will I get a lodgin' here the night?' says I to the lanlady.—'Who are ye?' says she.—'Who am I?' I says; 'I 'm yir honor's servant, on a mission,' says I, mentionin' yir name, masther.—'Can ye pay for a bed?' says she.—'Can money do it?' says I.—'To be sure,' says she.—'Then look here,' says I; an' wid that I show'd her four and sixpence—for I only spent sixpence at the berrin'.—'Go into the kitchen,' says she, 'an' I 'll see what I can do for ye.'—'Thank ye, ma'am,' says I. So I goes my ways into the kitchen, and sits down by the hob. That was very agreeable for a time; but when I dried myself, an' wanted to go to bed after a drop or two, how d'ye think they sarved me? only, sure, yir honor, by putting me in bed with a *furrener*,—nothin' more nor less than a *black*, savin' yir presence,—for it was the *fair* night o' the town, and beds were scarce, an' not to be had for love or money; so I was *oblidged* to sleep double, plaze ye, sir, in a two-bedded room. They tould me he was only a *sweep*; but he turned out to be a *raal* black, to my sorrow!"

"In what way?" inquired I.

"Oh! in many ways, sir," replied Darby. "First *and* forenenst, he prevented me takin' my natural

rest afore midnight; for I took a Bible oath on a child's catechism that I wouldn't enther the room where he was afore the *good people* were gone to roost; for who knows what they might have made of me? Lord bless ye! they'd av' turn'd every hair o' my head into pump-handles, if they liked, afore morn! so I thought it best to sit up a while, an' kick up a bit ov a dance in the kitchen width Katheen the maid, an' two or three other *spreesans* that were inclined for the fun; an' fine sport we had, to be sure, to the tune of '*The Hare in the Corn*,' and '*Roger de Cuvverly*.' Did ye ever trip it to 'Roger de Cuvverly,' yir honor? Oh! it 's an illigant cure for the gout!"

"I never dance," said I.

"An' more's the sorrow!" said Darby, "for ye 've a fine pair o' legs o' yir own, an' it 's a pity that a lame piper shudn't be the better o' them some night or other!"

"We 'll see about that," said I; "holiday-time is coming."

"Thank ye, and long life to yir honor! Will ye give us the barn, sir, for a hop width the girls a-comin' Christmas?"

"Yes," said I, "and a barrel of ale into the bargain."

"Oh! *then, won't* that be illigant?" said Darby, *cutting an anticipatory* caper on the carpet. "An' *won't yir honor dance* yirself, sir?"

"I have said already that I never dance," replied I. "Go on."

"Yes, sir, imm*a*diately," said he, and continued. "Well, after a bit we had a game o' blindman's buff, an', to be sure, *raal* fun it was while it lasted, and that was till we got into the little hours; an' many 's the trick we play'd one another, till myself felt the miller throwin' dust in my eyes; so, givin' Katheen the wink that I was goin' aff slyly, I tould her to call me early in the morn, an' left the party to themselves. I soon tuk aff me, an' was asleep in no time; but in less than half an hour I had a most wonderful *drame*. I thought I was the first paycock that ever wore a tail in Paradise; an' maybe I wasn't proud o' myself, s*a*ted in the tree of knowledge, width Adam an' Eve, *ketchin'* flies width their mouth open, lookin' at me for wonder. 'Arrah! *cushlah!*' says Adam to his wife; 'isn't it a b*u*tiful sight?'—'Troth, an' it is,' says she; 'avick! I hope he won't fly away, for I 'd like to make a pet ov 'im. I 'll just step in*doors* for the bluudherbuss!' When I came to this part o' my *drame* the blood o' me ran could, an' I couldn't think what was the matther width me, barrin' it was the night-*mare*; but it was no such thing, for I turned on th' other side, and thought then I was a *racehorse* on the Curragh of Kildare, an' yir honor *clappin'* spurs into me within twenty yards of the *winnin'* post! Well, that was better than t'other;

but, as I was dr*a*ming in this fashion, I began to think they 'd never call me at all, when Katheen, yir honor,—the purty little girl, sir, that kept me up so late the night afore, dancin' with her in the back-kitchen,—gave a *puck* at the door with her fist, that sent in one of the panels, and dumb-foundered quite an ould clock on the back of it, that was pointin' width its two hands to some hour last year. 'Who the divil 's that?' says I.—'It 's only me,' says she, with a voice like a sp*a*king-trumpet, or a chorus of ganders. (I think the cr*a*ther had a could upon her.) 'Arrah! d'ye never mane to l*a*ve off sleepin'?'—'What o'clock is it, alanna?' says I.—'Oh! the same hour it was this time yisterday, I suppose,' says she, 'for the clock is *down*.'—'Faith! it is,' says I, 'nate and cl*a*ne upon the *flooer;* but never mind that, the sun 's *up!*'—'Ay,' says Katheen, 'this two hours or more.'—'And so wud I,' says I, 'if I had as far to travel in the day as he has!'—'Augh!' said Katheen, 'you lazy *puckaun*, did ye never hear that the early bird *ketches* the worm?'—'Troth, an' I did,' says I, putting on my shirt; 'but what an *ommadhaun* the worm must be to get up afore him.'—'An' over an' above,' says Katheen, 'the man that was on the road betimes in the mornin' found a purse.'—'Ay!' says I, 'but the poor divil that lost it was *there first.*'—'*Oh, the divil* be width ye! stop there *till ye 're stiff av* ye like,' said Katheen, and ran

downstairs afore I could say Jack Robison. Well, then, yir honor, I was soon drest an' up; so, as I 'd *ped* my way *the night*, I had *nawthin'* to do but pass clane through the kitchen in the mornin,' an' take to the road agen, when I saw Katheen a-lightin' the fire. I just stepped towards her for a kiss *a-dhurrus*, when she cried murther in Irish, loud enough to waken the whole house; so I thought I 'd have nothin' more to do width her this time, and went my ways paceably. It was a fine mornin,' barrin' the mist, that wudn't let ye see a yard afore ye at a time, an', to be sure, I *kep* it up at a fine rate till I rached the town of Kilcronan. But what d'ye think happened me there, yir honor?"

"I 'm sure I cannot say," said I.

"Well, then, I 'll tell ye, sir. As I was passin' by a pawnbroker's that was settin' out his goods for sale, what did I see but a lookin'-glass starin' me in the face, an' a blackamoor's head in the middle of it. Well, I look'd, and look'd, and look'd agen, but divil a bit was it like me; so, turnin' 'pon my heel, 'Bad look to them!' says I, 'they 've woke the *wrong man;*' for yir honor remimbers that I slept width a *furrener* the night afore, and left orders to be called early; so I had nothin' for it but run back agen as hard as I could lay foot to ground for twelve honest miles; and lucky sure it was that the fog *was so* thick as ye could cut it with a knife, or I 'd *av' 'ad* the divil's own time of it on the way. But,

as it happened, I met nobody that knew me, 'cept blind M'Diarmot the sign-painther."

"Sign-painter!" exclaimed I. "I thought you said he was blind."

"Augh! sure it was afore he lost his eyesight," said Darby, "that he was the most illigant sign-painther in the county. Didn't he paint *The Pig and Thrush* for Mat Sleven; an' *The Three Blacks*, that ye 'd take for two twins, they're so like one anuther; and *The Red Herrin'* for Pat Gaveny in the market, that look'd so *salt* it made yir mouth wather to that degree that ye cudn't help, passin' by, goin' in to have a drop? Oh! it brought powers of custom anyhow!"

"How did he lose his eyes?" inquired I.

"He didn't lose them at all, sir," replied Darby, "only the sight o' *one* o' them (for he never had th' other), an' that was all through Molly, *the Lump*, that advised him (bad win' to her!) to use crame when he had a could upon his intellects after the *typus;* so he mistuk a pot o' white lead for the same one evenin' that he had a drop too much, and fairly painted himself blind; for from that hour to this he can't see a hole in a forty-fut laddher. And more 's the pity, for he had plenty o' *drawin'* about the counthry to do; an' now his dog has got into the *line* ov it for him, the crathur! Well, anyhow, knowin' he was a jidge o' colours, I ax'd him to feel *my face, an' tell* me what was the matther width it;

so he puts his hand upon me, an' may I never die, masther, if it didn't turn as black as a crow as soon as he drew it acrass my cheek! 'Well,' says I, 'this b*a*tes cock-fightin'!' But I soon found out the trick they played me; for M'Diarmot, when he smelt his hand, said there was s*u*t and goose-gr*a*se upon it. So ye see, yir honor, the truth was, they blackened my face in the kitchen afore they put me to sleep with the black, that I mightn't know which was myself in the mornin'. May they live till the ind o' the world, that the divil may have a race after them, say I, for that same!"

CHAPTER III.

"Tipsy dance and jollity."—*L'Allegro.*

A FULL hour after Darby's departure I ventured to open the little dog-eared volume which he had thrown upon my table. The title-page was a curious specimen of that lingual learning which is so often to be met with in the remotest districts of Ireland. Gentle reader, a description of it would only spoil it; I therefore lay it before you as it appeared to me then, with this slight difference,—that the printer informs me he has no *letter* that can adequately express or imitate the rustic simplicity, *the care*'ess elegance both of the character and *setting* up. It was as follows:

THE DARBIAD!

A BACCHI-SALTANT EPIC. IN ONE BOOK.

AUCTORE CLAUDICANTE KELLIO.

Containing an Account of a Great Festival given at "The Three Blacks," by one Mr. Darby Ryan, on the occasion of his coming into his Fortune, and all the Songs an' Dances as perform'd there in honor to him.

Dulce est desipere in loco.

Printed by Mary Brady, her mark ×, at the sign of the Cross Quills in Monk's Lane, opposit the Friary. Price sixpence; and to be had of all Flyin' Stationers, and Dancin' Masthers.

I could not but admire the classical taste and ingenuity with which Mr. Kelly, the author, had Latinised his name. He had read, no doubt, that Ovid was called Naso from the excessive size of his nose; and, with a delicacy peculiar to himself, had elegantly concealed the vulgar cognomen of *Lame* Kelly,—by which he was known,—in the more pompous-sounding Roman appellation of *Claudicante! Kellio*, too, was another *curiosa felicitas;* for, while it was in perfect accordance with grammatical accuracy, it sounded like an ingenious *anagram of O'Kelly*, an ancient Irish name. But *to the poem itself.*

INVOCATION.

INSPIRE me, Phœbus! in the song I sing,
And to my aid the nine twin-sisters bring;
No common deeds I celebrate or praise—
DARBY THE SWIFT is hero of my lays!

AFTER a hurling-match by Darby won,
Although his nose had suffered in the fun,
He, with his rivals, now no longer foes,
To the Three Blacks in peaceful triumph goes!
Two blacks already had he in the fray,
But whereabouts I won't presume to say:
'Twould spoil the beauty of a hero's mien,
Though by the candles' glare they scarce were seen.

Many were met; of sisters, brothers, cousins,
Aunts, uncles, nieces, sweethearts, wives, some dozens.

First, Widow Higgins, with her daughters three,
Bedizen'd out as fine as fine could be,
Came on her low-back'd car, with feather-bed
And ornamental quilt upon it spread.
She look'd a queen from the luxurious East
Reclining on an ottoman:—the beast
That drew her, chicks and all, drew seventy stone at least!
And he to horse was what to man is monkey;
In epics 'twould be *bathos*, or I 'd call him donkey.

But (who can read the secret book of Fate?)
Just as the party pass'd the inn-yard gate,

A startled pig—a young and timorous thing,
That in a puddle had been weltering—
Woke from some rapturous dream, and in its fright
Rush'd 'tween the nag's forelegs, who, woeful sight!
Employ'd his hinder ones so wondrous well,
That Widow Higgins, bed, and daughters, fell
(Alas, my muse!) into the porker's bath!
Oh, day turn'd night! oh, pleasure sour'd to wrath!

But soon they did recover mirth, and joked,
For 'twas the feather-bed alone that soak'd
The stagnant pool:—no stain's impurity
Defiled their rainbow-ribbon'd dimity,
Save one; and that was on the widow's *crupper*,
Who said, "I wish they'd *scald* that pig for supper!"

Next came Miss Duff, in a light pea-green plush,
That beautifully show'd her blue-red blush.
Miss Reeves soon follow'd, spite of summer weather,
In pelerine of goose-down, and a feather.
The two Miss Gallaghers, the four Miss Bradys,
With I know not how many other ladies.
Amongst them Nelly Jones, with her first child,
That squeak'd and squall'd; then, cock-a-doodle, smiled.
Reader! I tell this for your private list'ning,
To have the clargy at his feast, a christ'ning
Our Darby thought would be a trick with art in
To *nail* the presence of big Father Martin,
Who was the *bochel-bhui* of jolly sinners,
At wakes or christ'nings, weddings, deaths, or dinners!
Suppose *Jack Falstaff* had ta'en holy orders,
And then I 'll say your fancy somewhat borders

Upon the plumpy truth of this round priest,
Who ne'er refused his blessing to a feast.

One slender damsel, that seem'd not fifteen,
With younger brother, in the throng was seen;
Shy and confused, as when a violet,
Suddenly snatch'd from its dark-green retreat,
First meets the gaudy glaring of the day,
And seems to close its beauty from the ray
Of unaccustom'd light that rudely pries
Into its gentle, modest, azure eyes.
What led her thither I could never learn.
But, hark! who comes? it is Miss Pebby Byrne,
All spick and span, to grace our hero's feast;—
And last, Miss Reilly, who, though last, not least,
Contributes by her dress and portly mien
To swell the splendour of the joyous scene.
Juno herself ne'er walk'd with such an air!
A bright-blue band encircled her red hair,
Clasp'd on her forehead by a neat shoe-buckle!
Her dress was gaudy,—though as coarse as huckle-*
Back, or the web call'd linsey-woolsey,—flowing
In graceful negligence, though sometimes showing
It had been cut for a more sylphid shape,
As sundry pins, o'ertired, released the cape!

But now the christ'ning's o'er: of wine and cakes
First Father Martin, then each fair, partakes;
The youths incline to porter and potcheen.
Miss Reilly condescends to be the queen,

* *The* usual spelling of this word is "huckaback;" but I *suppose Mr.* Kelly's excuse would be licet facere verba.

iding o'er the rites of dear bohea,
)se incense in one corner you might see
ng in volumes from four sacred stills,
.ch, as Miss Reilly empties, Darby fills
ı boiling fluid from a caldron spoutless,
t had been ages at the Three Blacks, doubtless.

ut now the pipes are smoking both and playing:
me, boys!" says Father Martin, "no delaying!
's have a song. Come, you first, Tommy Byrne,
then we 'll get a stave all round in turn."
ımy, obedient, put his *dudheen* * in
waistcoat pocket, and thus did begin:—

Tune—"Alley Croker."

I.

Your furreners, that come abroad
Into our Irish nation,
Expectin' nothin' else but fraud
And cut-throat dissertation,
What is 't they find on landin' first
But hundred *millia-falthas*,
And kindness that we still have nursed?
Though slav'ry near has spoilth us!
Wirra! wirra! wirrasthrue!
Wouldn't Erin's glory,
With the pen
Of clever men,
Make a weepin' story?

* *Dudheen*, short pipe.

II.

Says one,—"You lazy pisant! why
Parmit that pig so durty
To sleep beside you, when a sty
He 'd find more clane and purty?"
They little know that gratitude
To us was early sint, sir!
And so we think no place too good
For him that pays the rint, sir!
Wirra! wirra! wirrasthrue!
Wouldn't Erin's glory,
With the pen
Of clever men,
Make a dacent story?

Here a loud squeak of grunting praise was heard
From the new pig-house in the stable-yard:
Th' applause awhile the minstrel's music drown'd;
But soon he did resume, and all around
Remark'd how much his voice of late improved in sound.

III.

Another says,—"You idle dog,
Why do ye lock your door up,
And every sason quit your bog
To thravel into Europe?"
Sure we would gladly stop at home
The whole year round, and labour,
But for the harvest-pence we roam
To pick up in the neighbour-
Hood of England, wirrasthrue!

Wouldn't Erin's glory,
With the pen
Of clever men,
Make a pleasant story?

could not help laying the book down at this ge to reflect whether the imputation of idleness be justly thrown upon the Irish. Men who after year toil through the perils and privations ourney into another land for the sake of a few ngs, can scarcely be termed lazy; and it is to egretted that some mode of employment at is not devised by those in whose power it is liorate and tranquillise their condition.]

IV.

St. Patrick (many days to him!)
Thought *he* kilt all the varmin
That through the land did crawl or swim,
But he left their cousins-giarmin!
He never dreamt of two-legged snakes,
Or toads that were toad-eathers,
Or those *dartlukers** the law makes
To hunt our fellow-crathers!
(*Chorus, boys!*)
Wirra! wirra! wirrasthrue!
Isn't Erin's glory,
By sword and pen
Of wicked men,
Made a dismal story?

rtluker, the Irish name for a peculiar kind of leech that on a small fish called pinkeen.

"Success, avourneen!" cried the jolly friar,
"An' may yir whistle, *'lanna!* never tire!
Now for a toast, my boys, or sentiment,
An' here is one from me with your consent:
'A saddle prickly as a porcupine,
A pair of breeches like a cobweb fine,
High-trottin' horse, and many a mile to go,
For him that to ould Ireland proves a foe!'"

Miss Biddy Reilly was the siren next
Knock'd down for melody: she seem'd perplex'd,
And said: "Upon my conscience—rately—now—
I—Tommy, sing for me—well, anyhow,
I've nothin' new to trate ye with——"
"No matther!"
(From all parts of the room,) "sing *Stoney Batther!*"

With that she hem'd to clear her pipe, and through
Her bright-red curls her radish fingers drew;
Then looking round, and smiling as she look'd
(While many a heart upon her bait she hook'd),
Her ditty once, twice, she commenced too high,—
At last she found the key;—then, with a sigh
Long-drawn and deep, her quivering voice she woke,
Which rose and curl'd—ay, gracefully as smoke
Seen at a distance—misty-wreathing—dimly
Issuing from some wood-bound cottage *chimley*.

I.

In Stoney Batther
There lived a man,
By trade a hatther,
And a good wan:

The best of *ba*ver
He used to buy;
Till a deceiver,
Passing by,
Said,—"For a crown
I'll sell ye this."
"Come in," says he,
"Let's see what 'tis."

II.

"The finest skin, sir,
You ever saw;
Without or in, sir,
There's not a flaw!
No hat or bonnet
You ever made,
With gloss upon it
Of such a shade!"
"Then put it down,"
The hatther cried;
"And here's yir crown,
And thanks beside."

III.

But, oh! what wondher
When he did find
The wicked plundher
The rogue design'd!
"My cat is missin',"
(Says he,) "black Min,
They've cut yir wizzin,—
I've bought yir skin!

Of neighbours' cats,"
Then wild he swore,
"I'll make my hats
For evermore!"

Miss Biddy Reilly ceased her pensive ditty,
And, with a look that made his rivals jealous,
She call'd upon our hero, who, quite witty,
Express'd a hope they would excuse his bellows,
As he had lately caught *cold* in the water,
'Stead of an *eel* that he was lookin' a'ter!
A loud horse-laugh first trumpets Darby's praise,
Then thus his low bass voice he high did raise.

Tune—"Young Charly Reilly."

I.

Beside a mountin
Where many a fountin,
Beyant all countin',
Ran swift and clear,
A valley flourish'd
That Nature nourish'd,
For she *dhuc-a-dhurrish'd* *
Her last drop there!
And said, at partin',
To Father Martin,
"There 's more of *art* in
Some spots of earth;

* *Dhuc-a-Dhurrish*, the drink at the door.

But, by this whiskey,
That makes me frisky,
In Ballanisky
Myself had birth!"

II.

In this inclosure,
With great composure,
And hedge of osier,
A cabin grew;
And, sweeter in it
Than any linnet
Could sing, or spinnet,
A maiden too!
Her time went gaily,
Both night and daily,
Till Rodhrick Haly
Pierced through her heart:
Oh! if he 'd spoken,
Or giv'n one token,
Sure 'twouldn't have broken
With love's keen dart!

III.

She thought his fancy
Was bent on Nancy
Or Judy Clancy,
Two sisthers fair:
Though in his bosom,
You can't accuse him,
But she did strew some
Love-nettles there!

For all that, never
Could he endeavour
His lips to sever,
And say, "Dear Kate!"
The lad was bashful,
'Caze not being cashful;
But she was rashful,
As I'll relate.

IV.

One Sunday mornin',
All danger scornin',
Without a warnin'
She left her home;
And to a valley
She forth did sally
That lay in Bally-
Hinch-a-dhrome!
A while she wandher'd—
And then she pondher'd—
At last she squandher'd
Her r*a*son quite;
And in a pool there,
Like any fool there,
She soon did cool there
Her burnin' spite!

Our hero ceased; and from the multitude
The suck-tongue sounds of pity that ensued
Would warm a stoic in his coldest mood:
Ducks on a pond, when gobblin' up duck-meat,
Ne'er smack'd a music half so sadly sweet!

Miss Biddy Reilly's long-lash'd eyes of jet
Were red (as rivalling her hair) and wet!
Some inward feeling caused this outward woe;
But what it was but love for Darby, I don't know.

But now *tay-tay* and coffee-*tay* are done,
And of the night begins the *raal* fun:
The dance is named, and straightway on the floor
Two dozen couple start,—I might say more.
But Darby interposes, and cries, "Stop!
Afore we have a reel let 's have a hop:
First—boy an' girl; then girl relieve the girl,
Next boy the boy, till all round have a whirl!
Miss Reilly an' myself will lead the first;—
Come, piper! squeeze yir bags until they burst!
'*Tatther Jack Welsh*, or '*Smash the Windows*,' play,
'*The wind that shakes the barley*,' '*Flow'rs in May*,'
Or any rantin' roarin' lilt ye know:
What! '*Ligrum Cuss?*' hurroo! then here we go!"

"He spake: and, to confirm his words," they all
Sat down obedient in the festive hall!
None but himself and Biddy upward stood,
All eyes were on them of the multitude!
But how shall I describe the wondrous pair,
Terpsichore! that worshipp'd thee then there?
Such grace, such action, on a malt-house floor,
Was never seen, or heard of, e'en, before!
O'Ryan's arms at stiff right angles to
His body were, which to the gazer's view
Betray'd no motion; while his legs below
Seem'd all St. Vitus' nimblest shakes to know!

With knees bent inward, heels turn'd out, and toes
That seem'd contending like two deadly foes
For one small spot of earth, he digg'd the ground
And sent the mortar pulverised around!
"Look at his feet!" was the admiring cry;
"Hold down the light that we may closely spy;
There 's double shuffle for ye! hoo! success!
He 'd dance upon a penny-piece, or less!"

Meanwhile, Miss Reilly, with her hands aside,
A varied change of steps and movements plied;
Now bold advancing in her partner's face,
Now shooting by a side-slip to a place
The farthest on the floor:—at every turn,
As round and graceful as a spinning churn!

But, ah! not long was she the dance's queen;
For young *Kate Duff*, who owed her long a spleen,
Swift as the lightning from a cloud of gloom,
Shot from a dim-lit corner of the room,
And sent the frowning Biddy to her seat,
Who mutter'd something that I can't repeat!

Long Curly next our hero's post relieves,
And *Kitty Duff* gives place to *Nelly Reeves*:
Curly, the piper's son, *Ned Joyce*, supplants;
The blind old father knows his step, and chants
The lilt with double force: *Miss Higgins* next
Sets down *Miss Reeves*: *Ned Joyce* retires, half vex'd,
For *Knock-knee'd Phelim*, who, despite his *pins*,
Applause from all for heel-and-toeing wins!

Thus did they trip it for a goodly hour;
When, oh! what charm there is in music's pow'r!
Old Joyce the piper seizes a short stay
To change his pipes:—and, what 's the merry lay
They now lilt up?—'*The Priest in his Boots*,' and lo!
(Whether 'twas all concerted I don't know,)
Fat *Widow Higgins*, 'midst the general shout,
By *Father Martin* is led waddling out!

Oh! how they tramp'd and stamp'd, and flounced and bounced!
A mercy 'twas they trod on the ground-floor,
For through a loft they surely would have pounced—
As 'twas, the earth was trembling to its core:
Sure such *flochoolah* dancers ne'er were seen before!

AN EXCELLENT OFFER.

BY MARMADUKE BLAKE.

"IT'S an excellent offer—so plain and handsome!"

The above contradictory description was applied by Mrs. Gibbs to the contents of a letter which a few hours previously had been received by her husband, Mr. John Gibbs, of Adelaide Crescent, Camberwell.

Mr. and Mrs. Gibbs were rather elderly: a stranger would have taken them to be brother and sister; for having lived together during the greater part of a long life, not only had their habits and modes of thought become congenial, but even the expression of their respective features had assumed a strong resemblance.

On the evening in which it is our purpose to introduce the reader to their acquaintance, Mr. and Mrs. Gibbs occupied the precise position which they had at the same hour occupied evening after evening for the preceding forty years; that is, Mrs. *Gibbs* was by the side of the table with her "work," *and Mr.* Gibbs sat with his feet upon the fender,

an open book by his side, on which his spectacles were deposited, while his body was assuming a backward inclination, which was occasionally checked by a sudden bobbing forward of the head, accompanied by a pulmonary effort of a most profound description.

"A little more, and I should have been asleep," said Mr. Gibbs; and, as the remark had escaped from the lips of that gentleman once every evening during nearly half a century, it did not seem to Mrs. Gibbs to call for any particular reply.

"I was speaking, my dear," said she, "of Mr. Paine's offer."

"And I," responded Mr. Gibbs, "was thinking upon the very same subject at the moment when you spoke. I was thinking that we must keep our eyes open to the advantages which are now presented."

Mr. Gibbs took a glass of wine, resumed his horizontal position, and seemed disposed to nod.

"Well, my dear,—now do rouse up,—if we are to accept Mr. Paine as a son-in-law, what will young Langton say to us?"

"I hope," said Mr. Gibbs, rubbing his eyes and yawning most uncomfortably,—"I hope Mr. Langton doesn't dream——"

"Why, my dear," interrupted the lady, "you must *allow we have* given him a little encouragement."

"Not at all—not at all," was the reply; "nothing could be further from my intention. If indeed he had such an idea as you seem to intimate, I 'm sure it has never been encouraged by me; he may have fancied otherwise, but anything of the sort on my part was mere manner, I assure you."

Mrs. Gibbs seemed satisfied, and the conversation on Mr. Paine's offer was resumed.

"He is so very respectable," said Mr. Gibbs, "and at a very suitable age for Caroline; two giddy people together would never do any good: I don't think much good ever comes of early marriages."

"We were neither of us of age when *we* married," interposed Mrs. Gibbs. "I hope you consider that case to have been an exception."

Mr. Gibbs was still dozy, and he nodded his head just at the right moment. The lady continued,

"If I were asked to *choose* a husband for my daughter, I shouldn't hesitate to give her Paine."

"Nor I either," replied Gibbs, who misunderstood his wife; "it would be entirely for her own good."

"He is a very pleasant man," ruminated Mrs. Gibbs.

"He has a thorough knowledge of the world, a great deal of philosophy, and——"

"A nice house in the Regent's Park."

We need not further pursue the interesting dialogue; suffice it to say that it terminated in a

decision favourable to Mr. Paine, and a comfortable belief that if Mr. Charles Langton should go out of his mind, it would be entirely his own fault, as any encouragement which he might fancy to have been given was only to be attributed to Mr. Gibbs's "manner."

Mr. and Mrs. Gibbs were "early people;" the clock struck ten, the housemaid and cook were heard ascending to their places of repose. Mrs. Gibbs followed, while her husband commenced, according to nightly custom, a perambulation in the dark, in order to see that everything was right; and having descended into the kitchen, and peeped into the cellar, and put his foot into a dish of water and red wafers set as a black-beetle trap, and knocked his forehead against a half-open door, he felt, as he said, satisfied in his mind, and could go to sleep in the most comfortable manner.

"What a beautiful night!" said the gentleman as he placed the extinguisher on his candle, and the bright light of the moon entered his dressing-room. He manifested, however, no romantic desire to sit and watch her silent progress, so in a short time her beams were falling on the unconscious features of Mr. and Mrs. Gibbs.

The night was beautiful indeed,—so beautiful that we can only hope to bring it to the mind's eye *of our matter-of-fact* friends by stating that it was *one of those evenings* when the moon attains a

brilliancy so extraordinary, that "you may see to pick up a pin;" having arrived at which point, we have been accustomed to believe lunar brightness can no further go.

The number of moonlight nights which shed their influence upon us during a passing year is of very small amount; and yet, when we suffer memory to look through "the waves of time," how much of moonlight is brought upon the mind! Day after day passes away, and although they give birth to new events and unlooked-for changes, yet they leave no more impression behind than we should experience after a survey of the fragmental patterns of a kaleidoscope,—each movement produces a variation, but there is nevertheless a general sameness of character which is altogether destructive of a permanent effect;—but in the lives of all men there have been moonlight "passages" which stand alone in their recollection, and which come upon them in after years, remembered as the periods when the heart, escaping from the stifling struggles of daily life, assumed a freer action,—moments in which they made resolutions which perhaps were broken, but which nevertheless it is some credit to them only to have made.

By daylight we are apt to consider mankind in the mass; by moonlight we invariably individualise, —we *feel* more deeply how mysteriously we stand *lonely* in the midst of countless multitudes, and

draw more closely to our hearts those who have sought to lighten

> "The heavy and the weary weight
> Of all this unintelligible world."

Reader, when you take a retrospect of life, we will answer for it that your fancy turns to some moonlight game with happy schoolfellows beneath a row of ancient elms, which threw their long cold shadows upon the greensward by the side of a village church. Let your fancy wander on, there is moonlight still: you roam, perchance, near the same church, and a gentle maiden is by your side; but you do not choose the elm-walk now, because the "schoolboys" divert themselves thereon, and you prefer a semi-solitary stroll. Onward still: you are mixing in the bustle and heat of life; and there are moonlight hours when the thought of your vain career comes upon your mind, and you form in your heart new resolves, and pant with higher aspirations. Onward once more: and the scene is drawing to a close, the mist is on your sight, and memory wanders o'er a field of graves; and now how often do you lift your aching eyes to the silent and trembling stars, and suffer fancies to dwell upon your mind, that perchance from those orbs the spirits of the dead may be *permitted to look* down!

We only intended to venture a few words upon

this subject, but we are afraid that we have written a "discourse."

There is a range of hill running from Westerham to Sevenoaks, the neighbourhood of which abounds with quiet scenery of surpassing beauty; and during the period in which Mr. and Mrs. Gibbs's dialogue took place, the young lady to whom it referred was indulging in a pleasant stroll in the garden of a cottage which stood in one of the little valleys at the foot of this range, and in which dwelt the parents of the young gentleman who was the companion of her walk, and who was the identical person whom Mr. Gibbs so strenuously stated to have received no "encouragement" whatever.

They wandered round a lawn encircled by a shrubbery path, which was glittering in the silver light: they were very silent, but they felt all that youth can feel, although an occasional exclamation of "How beautiful this is!" was all that mutually escaped their lips. A midsummer night and a garden-path are capable of imparting much power to the most delicate young ladies; and instances are by no means rare of some who would have shrunk from the prospect of an excursion extending to a mile from home, who will nevertheless stroll unrepiningly in company with a cousin or a friend two or three hundred times round a gravel-walk!

There was a happy family within doors,—brothers and sisters,—the light from the cottage-windows

shining on the shrubs in front, and the merry laugh sounding from within: occasionally they were interrupted in their stroll, and messages were sent to know "whether they were coming in, and that the grass was wet, and the night air dangerous, and Miss Gibbs very delicate," &c. &c. &c.; to which messages replies were given that "they were *not* walking on the grass, and that the air was exceedingly mild, and that Miss Gibbs had a headache, and found herself better out of doors;" and then they were told that it was past ten o'clock,—and they promised to come in directly; and Mr. Langton only asked Caroline to take one turn more, and during that time he took Miss Gibbs's arm; and then he must walk once more round, and "this should positively be the last;" and so they took another turn, and this time his arm gently encircled her waist; and as they came in, there was a little hesitation while they were scraping their feet, and Caroline upon entering looked a little confused, and Mr. Langton seemed remarkably buoyant, and he rattled on for an hour or two, till his mother declared that there was "no getting him to bed;" and after Caroline and his mother and sisters had retired he entered into an elaborate speech to his father concerning his prospects in life, which was only discontinued upon the discovery that his respectable *parent had been asleep* for upwards of an hour.

The reader who compares the stern reality of our

opening scene with the poetic character of that by which it was succeeded, will have little difficulty in anticipating the result: the first disclosed the decision upon a plan which it had long been the chief object of a worldly man to effect; the latter was the idle dream of a boy and girl who knew nothing of the world, and still less of themselves.

On the morning subsequent to his moonlight walk, cool reflection had operated on the mind of Mr. Langton so far as to reduce the ardour with which he desired to communicate to his father his design of immediately entering into some active pursuit, with the view of sharing with an amiable partner an income which he was quite sure he could not fail to realise, but which as yet existed only in his own imagination. Nevertheless, although the daylight had thus produced its usual effect, and had given a matter-of-fact turn to his thoughts, he felt that he really did love Caroline, although it might be prudent to wait some few years before he made a formal declaration to that effect. Like most other young persons, he imagined that it was the easiest thing in the world to live on with unshaken affection, however distant might be the realisation of his hopes: he was little aware of the numberless and apparently trivial influences which, *during* a period of prolonged separation or suspense, *tend* effectually to give a new colour to the views of *those* who have thus drawn upon futurity.

As he seated himself at the breakfast-table, he received from Caroline, in return for one of those

"Looks and signs
We see and feel, but none defines,"

a very kind glance, which assured him that he was the object of kind thoughts: he fancied that Fate had already twined the wreath that was to bring their happy fortune within one bright round,—that their love would be sanctified by the very difficulties with which he might have to contend before he could make her his wife—that, with her as the reward of his exertions, he could not fail to succeed, and that to her influence alone he should proudly attribute whatever honours he might ultimately gain:—that look across the breakfast-table, unobserved by others, was the source from whence his imagination found no difficulty in tracing the Nile-like current of his future career!

We want to compress into one paper events which were brought about by the course of several years; we must therefore hurry the reader over a few facts which perhaps he will have anticipated already.

Shortly after the consultation between Mr. and Mrs. Gibbs, Caroline received a letter from them, written in a tone of more than ordinary affection, interweaved with some little sermon-like passages touching *the implicit* obedience which children *should at all times* bestow upon their parents, and

enforcing the same by the observation that those who had lived in the world nearly sixty years must of course in that time have acquired a nice sensibility of the manner in which to deal with the affections of the young. It concluded by requiring her immediate return to town; it gave their best love to Mr. and Mrs. Langton, and their compliments to Mr. Charles.

On Caroline's return the arrangements respecting Mr. Paine were fully detailed. Caroline cried, and Mrs. Gibbs said it was very natural she should dislike to leave her mother—that she would consult her wishes in every way—that she lived only in the happiness of her child, but that she must *insist* upon her acceptance of Mr. Paine: and then Caroline's friends were entreated to come and see her as often as possible, and they were particularly requested by Mrs. Gibbs not to put any idle fancies into her head which might prejudice her against the match; and one young lady of four-and-thirty, who had once possessed some charms, and who had flirted away all her chances, was desired to come and "cheer her up" whenever she could find time: the said young lady having for the last five years been in the habit of expressing a contempt for *very* young men, and an extreme desire to become the wife of some "nice old gentleman who kept his carriage."

After the detail of these circumstances, it will not be thought surprising that, at a period of seven years

from the opening of our story, Caroline had long been the wife of Mr. Paine; and, having become the mother of three children, had made every effort, although perhaps she had not succeeded, to forget the moonlight walk in which she had been "*so* happy" with Charles Langton.

Mr. Paine was a merchant. His father, who had been a warehouseman in Friday Street, had, as is the custom of warehousemen, amassed a considerable fortune; and, although he had not been known to think very highly of himself while he was in indifferent circumstances, his own estimate of his value as a man gradually grew with the strength of his pocket. His friends considered this a very proper view, and towards the end of his life he became much respected. Some time before his death he had purchased for his son a partnership in a house of "high standing," in which that gentleman had gradually risen from junior partner until he became the head of the firm. He inherited along with his father's wealth a great similarity of disposition; and his ideas of the importance of the "house," and consequently of his own importance as the head of the firm, had become the all-absorbing feature of his mind. Now this, although it told with admirable effect in Broad Street, was scarcely calculated to astonish his West-end connections, nor was it *likely to give* that freedom of manner which *forms the peculiar charm* of domestic life.

Mr. Paine, on account of his mercantile standing, had been elected to a directorship of a prosperous insurance company; and as he was accustomed to look in daily at the office of the establishment, where he found himself surrounded by bowing clerks, and porters in bright waistcoats, who never heard a whisper from his voice without raising their hands to their hats, he became very deeply impressed with the idea that he really was an extraordinary person. No doubt he was so; but it was the misfortune of Mr. Paine that he never contemplated that "unbending of the bow" which is rather necessary to make home happy, and consequently when he returned from town he was cold and formal, in order to produce an impression on his servants similar to that which gratified him in the City; and when he took his seat at the dinner-table there was hardly any variation from the manner which characterised him as chairman at the weekly meetings of the company, each remark being delivered in a style which sounded very much like a Resolution of "the Board."

Men choose their acquaintances as they choose their wives, and are very apt to select those whose qualities differ most widely from their own. Acting upon this principle, Mr. Paine had become intimate *with* a person to whom he condescended in a more *than* ordinary degree.

This person was Mr. Hartley Fraser, an un-

married man, at about the middle, or, as it is very pleasantly termed, the prime of life. He was of good family and small income; which latter circumstance he always assigned as the cause of his determination to live single, although it was attributed by some to a habit of ease and self-indulgence which he was now not disposed to correct. He knew and liked everybody in the world; and his philanthropy was not thrown away, for he was universally sought after, and in the making up of parties was always spoken of as a very desirable man. He humoured the foibles and flattered the caprices of his friends; the ladies liked him because he was "so useful," and the men spoke well of him because he never became a rival. He had always avowed his intention of remaining unwived, since, to use his own words, he found that he could drag on quietly enough with six or seven hundred a year as a bachelor, and he felt no inclination to go back in the world by becoming the proprietor of an expensive wife and a needy "establishment."

His manner, which, as we have already stated, was quite antithetical to Mr. Paine's, was as easy and kind as possible; and his stiff friend was never able to unravel the means by which, in the absence of a cast-iron stateliness, he invariably seemed to produce a *feeling of deference* in the minds of those *with whom he came in* contact. Though professing *poverty, he never* borrowed. His appearance was

extremely good; while in conversation he rarely spoke of himself, and, if ever he did so, it was with an air of so little reserve, that his hearer could not help entertaining an idea that he was the most candid person in the world.

Mr. Paine felt quite proud of his popular acquaintance; and, as pride was the only attribute through which it was possible to gratify or wound that gentleman's feelings, of course he entertained as much regard for him as he could under any circumstances feel for any one. Fraser was therefore a frequent visitor at his house, which, despite of the governor's formality, was pleasant enough, for Caroline was always kind and cheerful, and "the children" were never visible.

Mr. Fraser soon became aware that his visits were rendered more frequent by the attraction of Caroline's society, while she could not sometimes help acknowledging to herself that her husband's selfish coldness was not placed in the most favourable light by a contrast with his agreeable friend. This was a dangerous discovery; but just at the period when it might have led to serious inroads on her happiness, an accident occurred which gave a new turn to her thoughts, and which tended to a catastrophe as unforeseen as it was fatal.

At an early hour in the afternoon a servant who had charge of the children would frequently request permission to take the eldest, a fine boy six year

of age, for a short walk. Her consideration for the health and mental improvement of her young charge invariably induced her to wend her way to Oxford Street, where, by a strange coincidence, she invariably met a young gentleman in a flour-sprinkled jacket who emerged from a neighbouring baker's, and with whom, though they only met on these occasions, it afterwards appeared she was "keeping company." During the period of their conversation the child was told to "play about;" and, with that inherent love of liberty which dwells in the human mind, the boy made a point of availing himself of this permission by forthwith getting into all those spots which at other times he had been taught to shun. Occasionally a foot would become fixed between the iron gratings of an area in such a manner that he was unable to extract it; and then he would immediately roar as though he had been placed there by some tyrannical nursery-maid, and a crowd would collect to sympathise with his pangs, and at length to witness his extrication. At other times the gutter would seem to offer irresistible attraction; and in all cases the attentive guardian to whom he was intrusted consented not to tell her "missus" of his delinquencies if he would promise not to say a word about the young man from the baker's. This system was carried on till it had nearly terminated in a serious event. The child, having *on one occasion* stepped off the footway, was thrown

down in attempting to escape from a carriage that was furiously approaching: in another instant the horses would have trampled upon him, had not a young man who observed his frightful situation rushed, heedless of danger, to the horses' heads, and, with the aid of the coachman, arrested their progress. The stranger learned from the boy his name and residence, conveyed him home, and, after giving an account of the accident, left a card with the footman to whom he delivered the child. About an hour afterwards the guardian angel returned in great alarm, when she was immediately favoured with unlimited leave of absence, and thereby enabled, literally as well as metaphorically, to "keep company" with her interesting friend.

On the following morning a paragraph, which ran as follows, decorated the columns of the *Morning Post*:—

"Yesterday, as Lady Crushmore's carriage was going down Oxford Street, it nearly passed over a child who had fallen before the horses: the boy was, however, rescued by a person who happened to witness his perilous situation. We merely notice the circumstance in order that we may have the satisfaction of recording a noble instance of humanity on the part of Lady Crushmore, who would not suffer the coachman to drive on until he had inquired whether the child was hurt."

It would be impossible to describe Caroline's

feelings when she received the account of the accident: she took the card which had been left by the stranger, but in the excitement of the moment she did not heed the name, and, throwing it on one side, she pressed the terrified boy to her breast with hysteric minglings of tears and laughter. That afternoon Mr. Paine returned in company with Fraser; and, as he entered, he received an account of what had happened. He was by no means moved, but went into the matter and asked questions in a most cool and dignified manner.

"Really," he said, "I think this is a case we ought not to look over; and therefore I must move, that is, I would suggest, that the boy should receive a very severe whipping."

The motion, not being seconded, fell to the ground, and Mr. Paine continued,

"Have you learned the name of the person by whom he was accompanied home?"

Caroline recollected the card, and, without looking at it, handed it to her husband.

"Langton—Charles Langton, Raymond Buildings," ruminated Mr. Paine; "I don't know the name."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Caroline; "Charles Langton?"

"Yes, my dear; is there anything so extra*ordinary in the name*—is he any connection of your *family?*"

"Yes—no—that is, my father had a very old friend of the name of Langton, who lived near Sevenoaks."

"Ah," said the amiable Paine, who prided himself on the sarcastic, "Raymond Buildings are within a stone's throw of Sevenoaks."

Mr. Paine had not observed any great peculiarity in Caroline's manner; but he was excessively fond of giving utterance to an occasional sneer, which was the highest effort of his conversational power. But with Fraser, who had been a silent spectator of the scene, the emotion which Caroline betrayed when the card was read did not pass unnoticed or unremembered.

Mr. Paine, having on the subsequent day made strict inquiries as to the respectability of the man who had saved his child, condescended to forward a note of thanks and an invitation to dine. This was immediately accepted, for Langton was not ignorant that the mother of the boy was his early friend; and, although circumstances were so sadly altered, he could not resist an opportunity of renewing the acquaintance.

The dinner to which he thus had the honour of being invited went off rather flatly. There was a large party, principally composed of that class of persons who get their heads muddled in wool and tallow speculations during the day, and who attempt to become particularly brilliant and exclusive in the

evening, when unfortunately it generally happens that, despite their best exertions,

"Let them dress, let them talk, let them act as they will,
The scent of the city will hang round them still."

Fraser, to whom Mr. Paine always looked as the enlivener of his otherwise cold dinners, was on this occasion unusually quiet, Langton and Caroline were mutually embarrassed, and Mr. Paine's platitudes grew more and more tiresome, till at length, when the dessert made its appearance, he took an opportunity of effecting an elaborate speech, the object of which was to impress upon his friends the sensation which would have been created if the eldest child and only son of Mr. Paine, of the firm of Paine, Grubb, and Jones, had been the victim of any serious accident, and the gratitude which in consequence they ought to entertain to the person by whom such an event had been arrested.

"A shock so calamitous," he said, "has been averted by the intrepid conduct of Mr. Langton; and I must therefore beg that he will accept the cordial thanks of this meeting,—that is, of myself and friends,—for the courage and presence of mind which he so seasonably displayed."

This speech exhibited such a style of pompous foolery, that during its delivery Fraser was tempted *to glance at Caroline* with peculiar significance, *which seemed to* intimate a considerable degree of

contempt for her husband, and an idea that a similar feeling could not be altogether a stranger to her bosom.

Langton observed all this; and although it was with little surprise, for he knew that love is more easily alienated by pride than any other sentiment, yet he could not help feeling the most sincere regret that Caroline had entered upon that dangerous path, the first step of which is the condescending to show to any man a feeling of this nature.

"I have not learned to love her less," he said, when afterwards meditating on this circumstance, "and I love her too well to see her comfort or fame lightly lost while it may be in my power to save her. It was always her nature to be easily led by the influence of others; and although her pliant disposition may have linked her destiny with one whom it is evident she can never love, yet she may still be saved from a more fearful sacrifice. I will see her, and in the recollection of our early friendship, as well as in the recent claim which I have acquired upon her feelings, I will venture to speak boldly and sincerely. In warning her of the precipice on which she stands, she must not, however, be violently aroused to a sense of danger which perhaps she has not yet acknowledged to herself. I must first gently win her back to that spirit of confidence which we formerly knew, and, if I succeed in my ultimate aim, how slight in comparison will seem the peril from

which I have saved the child, to that from which I shall have rescued the mother!"

Alas! that the morality of the young, which is so strong in thought, should be so weak in practice as it ever is. Here was another stone added to that pavement which is said to be composed of good intentions.

From this time he became a frequent visitor in the Regent's Park, and the result of this course will be best given in the description of an interview between himself and Caroline which took place about three months afterwards.

"Caroline," said he, as during a morning call, which had been prolonged to a most unfashionable extent, he sat alone by her side, "I find you the same kind being that you always were; it is from that tenderness of feeling, which under happier circumstances would have given additional value to your character, that I now dread an inroad on your peace. You confess that you are wearied with the cold and monotonous routine of your daily life, and that it is your fate to be linked with one who is incapable of understanding or returning any deep emotion of the heart; can you then wonder that I should tremble for your peace, when I see you flattered by the attentions of a man from whom I am afraid you have not been sufficiently discreet to *conceal the disquiet* which you suffer?"

"*Indeed, indeed*, you have mistaken me," ex-

claimed Caroline. "I have neither been flattered by his attention, nor have I in any way confided in him: to you only have I spoken thus. I was wrong, very wrong, in doing so; but you entreated me to speak without reserve, and it is hardly kind of you now to tax me with the fault." As she said this, the tears started to her eyes, and as Langton gazed upon her he knew that the very confidence which had appeared so dangerous when he imagined it to be given to another, was now unreservedly bestowed upon himself: did he remember his indignant anticipations of broken happiness and degraded character on the part of Caroline, or did he apply to himself those rules which he had deemed so necessary to be considered by another? Alas! no. He took her hand, and said in a voice which faltered with emotion,

"Caroline, dear Caroline, I cannot bear to see you give way thus. Come, come, we must not have any tears: you may be very happy yet."

"No," she said, making a vain attempt to repress her sobs, "I do not hope to be happy,—I have not deserved to be so; for I knew, when they wished me joy on my wedding-day, that my happiness was gone for ever. But I must not talk thus to you, Charles; I have no right to trouble you with sorrows of my own seeking. Besides," she continued, smiling bitterly through her tears, "you are about to be married to one who cannot fail to love

you, and I must claim no share in your thoughts. Believe me, I will conquer every emotion that you desire to be repressed. I will endeavour to be all that you would wish to see me,—indeed I will: only tell me that you are not offended,—that you do not think less kindly of me than you have always done,—and that you will sometimes think of her who, while she lives, can never cease to think and pray for you." She buried her face in her hands and wept bitterly. "Don't, don't speak to me now," she said, as her tears flowed more quickly; and Langton, taking her hand, felt them falling on his own. At that moment he considered himself pre-eminently wretched; he pressed her head upon his shoulder, bidding her be more calm, and, as he imprinted one kiss upon her forehead, a servant entered the room.

"Did you ring, sir?"

"No!" said Langton furiously, and the intruder disappeared. Servants always think you ring at the very moment when you wish you were in a wilderness!

The party who received Mr. Langton's impetuous negative was a fat housemaid of extreme sensibility; and as the sensibility of housemaids is usually concentrated upon themselves, of course, in the description of the indignity she had received, any very delicate consideration for the character of her mistress could not be expected to find a place. A committee was immediately formed in the pantry, where she

related the "undelicate" conduct of that lady to her sympathising colleagues, and several strong resolutions were immediately carried expressive of their unqualified admiration of virtue in general, and their particular disapprobation of the deviation from its strict rules which had just been detailed; but as the said committee could not perceive any particular benefit to themselves that was likely to result from a disclosure to Mr. Paine, they determined to let the matter drop, and merely to suffer it to exist as an occasional topic to give intensity to those sublime denunciations of the wickedness of their betters in which they were accustomed to indulge round the kitchen fire, when their thoughts were glowing beneath the stimulus of an occasional bottle of wine which had been abstracted from the cellars of their "injured master."

Of course, however, it was not to be expected that the knowledge of the circumstance should be concealed from their immediate circle of acquaintance; and as the greengrocer wished he might drop if he ever breathed a syllable about it, and the milkwoman thanked Heaven that she never was a mischief-maker, of course the insulted housemaid "didn't mind telling them," upon their promise of profound secrecy; which was especially necessary, as, with the exception of the servants on each side of Mr. Paine's, and the nurserymaid opposite, not a soul knew a word about the matter.

Now it so happened that the watchful being who had been discharged on account of the affair in Oxford Street was one of those amiable cha racters by whom forgiveness of injuries is accounted a duty. She had carried out this principle so far that, although she had been desired never to enter the house again, she would occasionally call after dark to see her old fellow-servants, with whom she would sometimes take a glass of ale, in order to show how completely she had subdued those feelings of animosity which she might be expected to entertain towards the person at whose cost it was provided. She always seemed to take the same interest in the family as she had formerly done, and, with a spirit of Christian charity which did honour to her nature, she would sometimes declare "that, although they had injured *her*, yet she hoped it would never come home to them."

Any concealment from a person of this disposition was of course unnecessary; and when she was made acquainted with the circumstance, her horror was unlimited. "Poor Mr. Paine, who was so much of a gentleman!—and Mrs. Paine, too, who always seemed to love the dear children so!—who would take care of them now?—and then *that* Mr. Langton, she always said from the first she never liked *him!* But no," *she continued*, her goodness of disposition *again overmastering* every other feeling, "I won't

believe it,—I can't do so; though I know, Mary, that you wouldn't tell a falsehood for the world, and, if you couldn't speak well of anybody, would rather say nothin' at all."

The reader will be surprised to learn that, although Mr. Paine's servants had acted with such praiseworthy reserve, a letter was received by that gentleman at the insurance office of which he was chairman, (the seal bearing the royal arms, which had been produced by the application of a sixpence; and the post-mark giving indications of the existence of a place called Goswell-street Road,") the purport of which was as follows:

"Sir,—Nothin but my aukziety for your peas of mind could indews me to writ this letter, which i am afeard will set your fealings in a flame, & cause you grate distres. i am sorry to say your confidens is abused, and that you have little idere of the fallshood which will be found in what i am goin to relate.

"Your wife is untrew—the young man who pickt up Master Eddard when he *would* run into the rode, is one of her old bows. You may depend upon my assurance, for altho' there is an animus signatur at the bottem of this, the writer is a steddy young woman and knows what wickedness is.

"If you don't take warnin by what I have writ

you will peraps be unhappy all the rest of your days, and so I hope you will.

"From your sincere well-wisher,

"J. J."

It is said that, for the deprivation of one sense, compensation is not unfrequently given by an increased action which is acquired to the remainder; and those who have seen men cut off from the enjoyment of some long-cherished feeling at the moment when its gratification seemed most essential to their happiness, must have admired the benevolence with which Providence has thus bestowed upon the mind a capability, when it is deprived of one pursuit, of falling back with redoubled ardour upon another. But Mr. Paine was an exception to this rule; he was rather the incarnation of a single feeling than a sharer in the complicated emotions of mankind. Pride was the only thing that he was conscious of,—the one point from which all his ideas radiated; and, when this was destroyed, his existence might virtually be considered at an end.

From the moment that he had received the wretched scrawl, the alteration which took place in this unhappy man was of the most extraordinary kind. He had never been suspicious, for, loveless though he was, the possibility that *his* wife could sink to frailty had never entered into his mind;

but, when the idea was once aroused, he seemed without hesitation to receive it as a truth; and that that truth should be forced upon him by the agency of a person who was evidently of the lowest class was an aggravation of the keenest kind. His spirit was from that day broken. Homage seemed a mockery, for he felt that the most despised among those who showed him reverence possessed a more enviable lot than it could ever be his fate to know again.

For a few days the secret remained fixed in his own heart,—that heart which had sought to citadel itself in its indomitable pride, and which was now crushed and powerless. At length to Fraser, by whom his altered manner had been remarked, he ventured to ask, with an air of forced coldness, "Whether it had ever occurred to him that Mr. Langton had been in the habit of paying more than proper attentions to the mother of the boy whom he had rescued?—he did not mean to hint that those attentions had been encouraged or received—that of course was out of the question; but still——"

He hesitated; and Fraser, deceived by the quietude of his manner, thought it a very good opportunity to say a few words upon a subject that had given him some little annoyance. He readily avowed "that he entertained no very high opinion of the gentleman in question, but" (of course) "his

opinion of Mrs. Paine's correct feeling was so strong that he thought the matter need cause very little discomfort. Nevertheless, he imagined it would be as well to intimate to Mr. Langton that his constant attendance in the Regent's Park was no longer expected or desired."

This was the confirmation that was sought—the vulgar letter was accurate enough—all the world were pointing at him. Fraser had noticed it, but in delicacy to his feelings, and in gallantry to his wife, had forborne to speak more explicitly: he had no remedy; wronged as he was, he had no remedy. He might go into a court of justice, and there, in consideration of his shame being recorded upon oath, he might receive a sum equal to about a tithe of his yearly income. He might kill the man; and then also the world, with whom suspicion only might exist at present, would be certified of the fact. No; his course was run,—there was but one way left for him to pursue.

It was dusk on a summer's evening, a few days after this, that Caroline and Langton met for the last time.

"Charles," she said, "it is not a resolution lightly formed; it has cost me a struggle which I knew I should experience, but which I never expected to have conquered—you must not see me *more! Nay, do* not utter one word of remon-

strance; you may by so doing make the separation more bitter, but you cannot shake my resolution. I dare not trust myself to say all that now rushes to my mind; yet, perhaps, parting as we do for ever, I may be forgiven for saying that I always loved you: this I could not help; but, with such a feeling, I ought to have shown more strength of mind than to have sacrificed your happiness and my own even to a parent's wish. I failed to do so, and it is right that the penalty should be borne. Farewell! You can appreciate all that I now suffer, and you will tell me that you love me better for the determination which I have made. Believe me, a time will come when you will praise God that I had sufficient strength to endure the agony of this trial. We have been very foolish,—we ought never to have met; but thank Heaven that, having met, we have escaped from guilt. There, now leave me—pray leave me, and——"

At this moment they were interrupted by a hasty knock at the street-door; they stood still for a moment: it was Mr. Paine. He seemed, upon entering, to make some inquiries of the servant: he ascended the stairs, paused for an instant at the drawing-room door, as if about to open it, and then with a hurried step ascended to his dressing-room above. Caroline and Langton moved not; they seemed to dread some coming event, and yet they

had no definite ground for fear. Several minutes elapsed; at length Langton smiled and was about to speak, when they heard a heavy, lumbering fall upon the floor above, followed by a long low groan, the sound of which was never afterwards forgotten.

We willingly draw a veil over the circumstances of this scene, and have only now to detail the events to which it ultimately led.

The parting between Caroline and Langton on that dreadful night was *final:* he made an attempt to see her once more during the period of her suffering, but this she positively refused. The suicide of her unhappy husband caused some little talk at the time; but as it was proved, to the satisfaction of a coroner's jury, that his death took place on a Wednesday, and that upon that day he had written a short note which he had dated "Thursday," they without hesitation returned a verdict of "Temporary Insanity," and the newspapers saw no reason for departing from their usual plan, by attributing the rash act to any other cause than the unsuccessful result of some speculations on the Stock Exchange.

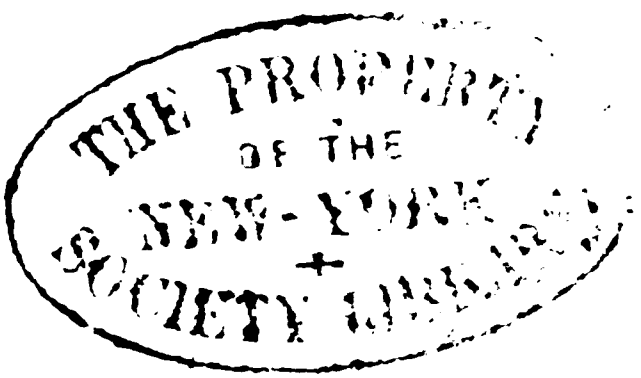
The world (that is to say, those immediate connections who became acquainted with the circumstances of the case), upon a retrospect of the affair, condemned Mr. Paine for his pride, Mr. Fraser for his politeness, and Caroline and Langton for their *indiscretion;—the only* persons mentioned in our

story with whom the said "world" found no fault were—Mr. and Mrs. Gibbs!

Mr. Paine had made no alteration in his will, and a large portion of his property was left to his widow during her life. Caroline passed some years in deep seclusion, devoting herself to the education of her children, and seeking consolation in the exercises of religion, wherein alone she could hope that it might be found. She died at the commencement of the present year; and an extract from a letter addressed to Langton, which was discovered among her papers, may serve to conclude her history, and to impart a moral which may not be altogether vain.

"You will perhaps be surprised at this request" (she had entreated that he would undertake the guardianship of her children), "but, after all that I have suffered, I could not feel one moment's peace if I thought it possible that in the course of events a similar fate might attend upon them. Edward will require little care,—to the girls my anxiety is directed: the destiny of women is too often fixed when they possess little power of judging wisely for themselves; and, even if they should possess this power, strength of character is required to enable them to resist all other influences, and to abide firmly by the judgment they have formed. Remembering *that* my fate was thus rendered unhappy, you will

not hesitate to guard my children against the misery I have endured. Watch over them, I entreat you; and let that love which, when it was bestowed upon me, could lead only to sorrow, descend upon them with the consciousness of purity. I know that you will do this; I know, above all, that in affairs of the heart you will consult their feelings of affection rather than their dreams of pride; and while, on the one hand, you prohibit a union that might degrade them, you will, on the other, be equally cautious never to *enforce* the acceptance of an excellent offer.'"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THE QUARANTINE.

BY CAPTAIN MEDWIN.

BE it known to all travellers that there is, or was, a steamboat to Civita Vecchia from Marseilles. I had passed the winter there, if winter it can be called, —for the myrtle, indigenous to that coast, never loses its flowers, in bud or blossom, and the orange and the citron, and many of the most delicate of the tropical productions were growing in the open air.

The carnival was drawing to a close, and I was anxious to reach Rome in time for the offices and ceremonies of the Settimana Santa,—to hear the Miserere in the Sistine Chapel,—to receive the Benedicite in the Great Square of St. Peter's,—to behold the illumination of that greatest of temples, and the fireworks of St. Angelo. Another cause for my departure was, that I had become tired of green peas,—excuse my being so unsentimental as to name them,—and, for these reasons,—you will think me very confidential,—I embarked on board this steamer for Genoa.

It was the month of April. I basked in the sunshine, and inhaled with delight the genial breeze, as we ran along the shore. The deck was covered with flowers; and it seemed to me that the pilgrim voyage from the Pyræum to Delphi could not have been a more continual fête.

And now the dark blue waves of the Mediterranean glittered in the distance, whilst the water, placid as that of a lake, appeared to fly behind the vessel. In front that key to the two seas, the stupendous rock of Gibraltar, presented itself; whilst to the right those of Tetuan and Ronda lifted their aërial summits into the clouds. There is not on the face of the whole world a spot that in sublimity can match with this, uniting, as it does, in one point of view, outlines so varied an

picturesque; exciting emotions so profound, and reviving recollections so heroic. For we behold, on either hand, two continents, where civilisation and barbarism meet; two quarters of the globe the most dissimilar, and hostile to, each other.

As we rounded the peninsula of Gibraltar the giant mountains of Africa developed themselves, and the last rays of the setting sun gleamed on the old ramparts of Tarifa. Further off could be descried Algesiras and its smiling plains, where was fought the celebrated battle of Rio Salado, in which Don Alfonso annihilated the innumerable armies of the Moors; where, and at Las Novas di Toledo, was decided the question whether the cross should triumph over the crescent, or all Europe bow to the Mahomedan yoke. But, without here indulging in any further reflections,—which, after those of Gibbon, would be trite and superfluous,—I will introduce you to one of our party, our *pars maxima rerum*.

The lady was of a certain age,—which means no age, or any age; one of those old maids who, to the astonishment of foreigners, swarm about the Continent, without either servant or protector, singly, as in this instance, or in twos or threes, in innumerable others. I had fallen in with her more than once during my Swiss tour, and we passed the night together—I mean no scandal—in a cowhouse on the Grimsal, the wretched accommodation of its solitary inn having been pre-engaged by a large family; so that our faces, at least, were familiar to each other.

Speaking of Switzerland, she had traversed almost every pass on the Alps; slept among the snows, and crossed fissures in the avalanche on a single plank: exploits that obtained for her among the guides the name of the "*Cheval Anglaise*." Pierre Terraz told me he had once saved her from congelation by the animal magnetism of one of his legs,—a strange mode of keeping up the vital heat, and a hint taken from the practice of the brigands of Calabria. (*Vide* "Tales of a Traveller.") *Only think of putting* into the same sentence a brigand *and a spinster,—necessitas non habet leges*, without the e-

It is an applicable adage; and I hope, if she sees this mention of hers, she will not be so much offended as Henri Quatre's queen was, when the cotton-spinners at Dijon presented her with a pair *des bas*—to cover what queens should not be supposed by their subjects ever to have—legs.

Mauvaise honte was a feeling to which you may suppose our maiden lady was a stranger. Her height and figure, happily by no means common among our countrywomen, rendered her sex, to outward appearance, extremely problematic; she was scraggy withal; her small sunken eyes, of a sombre hue, were tinged with circles even deeper in colour; and her complexion, either from exposure to the weather, spleen, or excess of bile in the *rete mucosum*, was about as dark as that of a Chichi or Anglo-Asiatic.

This will not be thought a flattering likeness. All I can say is, that none of our party would have thought the portrait overcharged, or wanting in fidelity; and, if it were, caricature is pardonable in some cases. There *are* wrongs—— Let me keep my temper.

Morning had just dawned when Genoa rose out of the sea, and its coast in the distance seemed spotted with luminous points that grew more distinct at every revolution of the wheels, till her palaces, domes, spires, villas, and convents, with the barrier of her fortresses in the horizon, were revealed to sight.

She may well be called the *Superba;* and Alfieri was for once a poet when he thus addressed her:—

> "O thou who sitt'st in haughtiest majesty,
> Glassing thyself in the Ligurian sea,
> And towering from thy curved shores to the sky,
> I count at thy back, the mountains mantling thee,
> In moles and palaces proud, which Italy,
> Though great and fair, boasts not to rival. Why
> Are not thy *governors*, as thine should be,
> In thought, mind, conduct, somewhat worthier thee?"

It was only the beginning of the sonnet that suggested itself to the mind. We were soon doomed to learn the truth of the last two lines of the apostrophe from sad experience.

And now the boat entered between the two Mol

gigantic outworks of the time when she was queen of the Mediterranean. I had never visited that magnificent city; and, as Madame de Staël exclaimed with enthusiasm, "*Demain je m'éveillerai en Rome!*" so, as I gazed on the glorious spectacle, I said to myself, "In half an hour I shall be *there*."

I was well acquainted with the convulsive scenes of which that republic had been the arena—the struggles for power of the Adorne and Fregose, its Guelphs and Ghibellines.

Here stood the Doria Villa, with its terraces, quarries of marble; its frescos, painted by Perin del Vaga, one of Raphael's most distinguished pupils. To the left I saw the San Pier D'Arena, through which old Andrea fled after the death of his nephew Jiannettino. On the hill to the right was pointed out to me the site of La Inviolata, the palace of his rival, the princely Fieschi.

I visited, in thought, the D'Arena, where he sank in all his armour, on crossing a plank to a mutinous galley; and the gate against which was nailed the head of the Brutus of the conspiracy, Verrina.

I walked in idea through these streets of marble palaces — the Balbi, Nuova, Novissima, and Carlo Felice; entered the splendid churches of San Lorenzo and San Sirio. Just as I was indulging in all these reveries the harbour-master came on board.

I did not acquaint you, as I should have done, that the cholera had broken out at this time in England, and thence extended itself to some of the seaports on the south of France. I imagine it is owing to the ravages which the plague has made in Italy, especially at Genoa, that the quarantine laws are there enforced with a rigour unknown in any other part of the world.

The first inquiry this officer made was for the list of the passengers, in order to identify it with the passports.

We were marshalled on the deck, and of course the *vieille demoiselle* appeared among us.

The lady had the precedence, and our inquisitor, *addressing her, said,*

"*Signora, et suo* passaporto——"

"Here," said Miss Pigou.

He took it and read—

"Laissez passer librement Mademoiselle Pigou et son domestique."

"Dove é il domestico?" asked the harbour-master.

"I had no servant," said the lady, with embarrassment.

"She had no servant!" exclaimed the captain in alarm.

"She had no servant!" echoed the passengers all, with one breath, in consternation.

The servant might well be missing, since he was a mere *nominis umbra*,—not even his ghost could have been raised,—no servant of hers ever came on board. Either vanity or thoughtlessness had led her to falsify her passport.

"The domestico, then, died on the passage," said the officer, trembling lest he should have caught the infection,—"died of the cholera. Produce the servant or go into quarantine," added he, addressing the captain.

It was in vain that we all asserted the truth. Entreaties, threats, were of no avail. He ordered that we should immediately be set on shore at the lazaretto, and that the vessel should be moored in the quarantine ground, under the Lanterna.

At this moment I no longer wondered at the surprise of Iphigenia. In barbarous times, our ancient virgin would certainly have met with the fate of Arion, without a chance of being saved by a dolphin. As it was, the captain's curses were loud, and our own not less deep, though less vigorously expressed.

Behold us, then, landed at the Place of Dolour. The spot chosen for the lazaretto makes it certainly not the most desirable or sanitary of residences. It stands in a swamp below the ramparts, but separated from them first by the general Campo Santo, or cemetery, and nigh by a deep drain, always full of back-water in a state of putrescence, that washes the side of the prison. In front is the beach, whose accumulated shingles have attained such a height as almost to exclude the sea breeze, and consequently the fetid odours of the ditch have no chance of being neutralised by ventilation.

Owing to the arrival of several vessels from the Be

bary coast, the lazaretto was so crowded, that only one room was vacant, or rather, perhaps, our intemperate denunciations against the harbour-master had obtained for us as a penance the infliction of one general ward, like that of an hospital. I will endeavour to describe it. The apartment was about sixty feet long by forty wide. It had originally been whitewashed; but time, and the *mal-propreté* of its numerous sets of occupants, tobacco and other stains, not mentionable, made it difficult to guess what had been the original dye of the walls,—so that an artist (and there was one among us) might have found any colour that his canvas required. The brick floor had been innocent of water for some generations, and was covered with marks innumerable and indelible, that gave it the appearance of a tortoise's back, or a chess-board, without its regularity. There were three grated windows, of ample size, looking out into a narrow yard, bounded by lofty walls rising high above the roof of the building; and in the court was posted a sentinel, who paraded in front, in order to remind the *détenus* of what they were.

You may imagine our despair when we were shown into this barrack. We stared at each other in blank astonishment. But scarcely had we entered when we were visited by an upholsterer, who undertook to fit up our quarters, and soon commenced his operations. By means of wood and canvas, he contrived to cut the room unequally in two with a partition eight feet high, and behind it were ranged some iron bedsteads. Here was to be our dormitory. Outside this screen a *salle à manger*, as he dignified the place, was furnished with a table and some wooden chairs; whilst one of the corner windows was allotted to the cause of all our woes. Only speaking a few words of Italian, and her French not being very legitimate, Miss Pigou was heard storming at the top of her voice, and in high altercation with the concierge.

"Where is my bedroom, Camera?" said the *antiquated spinster.*

"*Your bedroom!*" replied the keeper with a sneer. "*Signora qui,*" *pointing* to the corner.

"I am not a signora," said the lady,—a "ragazza."

"Che," said the man, with the most imperturbable effrontery, "una ragazza—you are all fellow-passengers," and, eyeing her with attention, added, "There is no danger."

"What a brute!" exclaimed the lady.

"Si," muttered the keeper, "é molto bruta."

"I will appeal to the ambassador," menaced Miss Pigou.

"The ambassador has nothing to do with our quarantine laws: I am supreme here," said the man, and immediately turned on his heel.

"*C'était beau cuir.* If circumstances will not yield to you, says Lord Bacon, you must yield to circumstances,—so with us. We soon became reconciled to our situation:—we had books, a chess-board, and very agreeable society, composed of French and English. The term fixed for our detention was ten days, and the party promised to be an harmonious one. The restaurateur was a man of great promise. Our antiquated virgin ensconced herself in her corner; and we did not much regret the loss of her company. There is an anecdote told of Hoffman, that perhaps might not have been inapplicable had she joined our mess. Whenever it chanced that at dinner he was placed next to a *bas bleu*, he would tuck his napkin under his arm, whisk his plate off the table, and go and post himself as far as possible from her, looking wildly out of his little keen eyes, as though he had escaped being bit by an asp. This by the by.

We found the cook a distinguished *artiste*. He gave us little oysters, almost equal to those of Ostend. They are found imbedded in the rocks, and it must require a most experienced eye to detect them; red mullet *en papillote*—they proved, at least, if the Genoese are *uomini senza fede*, their sea is not *senza pescé;* quails, with their envelope of vine leaves, &c. The champagne and Burgundy were excellent in quality; and, after the cloth was removed, we proposed to pass the evening in recounting to each other our several adventures.

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THE FATHER.

A STORY FROM REAL LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "REAL MOUNTAIN DECAMERON."

THE interest of the following narrative (if interest it possess) is founded on the parental affection. To many the degree of it therein portrayed may appear morbid; but to those I would submit a few remarks on children considered as a great class of society, not as embryo elements of it—mere things of promise and present pastime. In pleasantry we may designate them as a happy little people, who have no need of laws, pains, and punishments among them; but when we seriously reflect on the corrupting and hardening effect on our hearts of worldly pursuits and collision with our fellow-men, and then turn to these innocent beings, happy by unerring instinct only, not through false views, or vicious aims, or the sufferings of others—when we grasp the little hand put artlessly into ours—when we look into the fair countenance, and say, "Here is the hand that never did offence, the eye that never looked it, the mind that never thought less *innocently than* the spirits of heaven!"—I say,

when, wearied with our worldly conflict, we turn into our domestic circle, and thus muse over these its purest ornaments, are we not justified in regarding children as a most important body? as a sort of link between our polluted, degenerate selves, and that primeval innocence of which we have on earth no representative or image left but "little children?" Surely it is something to enjoy daily so beautiful, so pure a spectacle, as a multitude of creatures of our own nature, without a speck of that defilement incident to all adult nature; creatures which realise all the ideas we can form of life in heaven,—of the society of angels.

I cannot but think that this constant presence of human nature pure and happy, of simple and innocent enjoyment, exerts a great though little-noticed influence on this whole great fighting family of man; and that each member of it foregoes somewhat of his selfishness, abates something of his fury, after every such contemplation of something happier than himself, which never yet regarded *self*, never was infuriated by passions. No wonder that the greatest of men have mostly evinced a passionate fondness for children; neither is it surprising that in some persons, not otherwise of weak character, such fondness should even rise to excess. In our mourning over a lost child, the very sources of our comfort bear in them an embittering venom for our grief. The same purity of soul which assures us

its acceptance into the bosom of God, also renders the memory of its vanished prettiness and graces more intolerable by the exemption of every, even the least drawback on our love, from failings or offence. To the busy world what, indeed, is the death of a child? It forwarded—it retarded no human aim; it stood an insignificant little alien by the side of the mighty and dusty arena of life. Not so to the parent:—to him its smile and play were the invigorating spirit that nerved him in the conflict; and the very apathy of the whole world beside, its utter want of sympathy with him in his (to *their* feeling) trifling loss, becomes itself an added source of poignant, lonely, heart-consuming misery.

I was requested by a middle-aged farmer to visit his only son, and set out with him on a ride of nine miles to his mountain home. As a specimen of a numerous class of the *aborigines* of Wales, and the most estimable class—the secluded breeders of sheep and cattle—I must briefly sketch my fellow-traveller. His manner was so reserved as to border on sullenness, until intercourse had dispelled its coldness. He wore a grey coat (of home-dressed wool) of a coarse texture, and a shapeless straw hat. There was an air of negligence about his personal appearance which betokened habits of solitary life; the moss from the bark of trees had greened his dress in many places; but, being a man of tall and fine person, and his behaviour indicating education above

that of a labouring rustic, his whole appearance was not without a homely dignity, primitive, though rather grotesque. There is a pensiveness of look and tone in the more secluded Welsh farmers, almost touching, produced, no doubt, by the solitude in which much of their lives is spent, as well as by the character of their native land. Many of the sequestered Welsh homes have something of the solemnity of a church in their grey antiquity, bowered by huge trees, in the depths of dingles, shut up by mountains so nearly meeting as to almost bulge over the roof of deep thatch. Owls hooting by night from one wild barrier ridge to the other, across these ravines roaring with waterfalls at a little distance, among huge mis-shapen rocks; and the plover (the bird of ill omen to the Welsh) shrieking from the fern in the still noon, and the kite from the hills' stony tops; the mournful morass, with its black bogs and ever-whistling wind, which beyond those tops cuts off communication with the world to all but resolute hill climbers;—all these cannot fail, while thus surrounding the native almost from birth to burial, to exert a plastic influence on the mind and character of man.

It was to such a home that my master-shepherd, as I shall call him, at last introduced me, after a long descent down a water-course, called by courtesy a *road*. The short dialogue which passed between us prior to our arrival may serve to bring the reader

acquainted with David Beynon, the hereditary owner of Llandefelach.

"You are a widower, I believe, David?" I remarked. (In rural Wales we exclude the "sir," and the surname, and the "mister," so frequent in Saxon usage.)

"Why, no; but much the same thing. My wife is alive; but her brother and I were on bad terms before our marriage, and worse after: this led to quarrels, which always made things worse, so we parted. Then we had a great dispute about which should have my little Peter. We could not both have him, and I could not part with him, and would not. I have no relations left, she has many; so I thought she could better spare him than I could. So I have been both father and mother to him; always in my lap, in my arms, and in my bed; abroad with me up the hill with the sheep, and in the snow he would toddle after me."

"Is your wife still desirous to have him with her?" I inquired.

"Furious about him still, I hear. I should be sorry for her, but I do hear that she finds a comforter in a fellow who courted her before we were married. I've had thoughts of our coming together again, for little Peter's sake, in case I should die, that he might not have in a mother a stranger to go to; *but, since I heard that*, I've done with her."

On reaching the antique home I found a very

sweet little boy, sensible, pale, patient, stretched on what appeared—from the dangerous state of typhus fever under which he was suffering—too likely to prove his deathbed.

Of terrible and overwhelming evils the mind does not readily admit the probability; but, when this happy incredulity is once overcome by evidence, the transition to absolute despair is rapid, and equally unreasonable with the previous obstinacy of hope. Hence it was that, no sooner had I signified to David that his child was in great danger, than his eyes rolled and dilated as if under some astonishing news, and a wild dismay marked his whole countenance. He stood a minute statue-like; asked again if I meant that his child was actually likely to die, and, without waiting reply, burst forth, "O my God! my God! what shall I do?"—then ran to his child as if he had but a minute more to see him alive, hung over him in dumb agony, and at last vented his agony in a womanlike flood of tears.

Afraid to flatter him with hope, I said something commonplace of his having surely known that his child was mortal.

"*Mortal!*" he exclaimed; "why, ay; and so am I too, thanks to God! for how could I bear to live without him now? A patient, sensible boy! a good boy and a fond! So fond of me, a rough man—just as if I had been his own soft mother! Oh!

sir, what avails it now? Now I wish to God he had been less good, less fond. I wish I could remember one fault he had; for now every pretty look of his up into my face, and all his pretty ways, do every one come back like a knife at my heart, now that I think I shall never see 'em more. Oh! doctor, bear with me; I am a lone man, and there's no one in my house that is a father but I! No one to feel with me, or for me!

On my second visit, delirium had supervened in my little patient. The first indication of wandering intellect in a beloved object is, to even the best-regulated mind, dreadful; but to our extravagant recluse it was a gorgon that almost produced a kindred reeling of the mind to that visible in the object he so doted on.

The boy fancied himself on the hill side with the sheep, and the affrighted father tried almost angrily to convince him of the delusion, as if he would steady and hold back by force that reason which he saw departing—that mind of precocious power of which he had been so proud, now wandering and groping in the shadows of a night too likely to prove eternal. A pretty, but vacant smile only answered to the agonised and eager words of the parent thus striving against nature: but once his hollow horror of voice and accent seemed to rouse the sufferer; for he *feebly tried to* raise his arm, as if to wipe *away the tears he* saw streaming from his father's

eyes, and by that pathetic and pretty action brought many more.

Day after day did this impassioned parent sit sleepless, wan, and without food, holding that small hand, and counting the beats of that frightful pulse, watching every turn of those half-extinguished eyes, whose light had been the very light of life to him.

Had David been less beloved by his farm-servants every duty would have been neglected by them, as was every avocation by himself but that of a nurse; for, taking no longer interest in anything beyond that little bed, he was grown impatient of their attention to even the most needful calls of daily duty. He seemed to fancy that the aid of every hand and every mind was demanded in that fearful crisis, on which depended his own future doom of deadly sorrow or restoration to happiness. He was enraged by the presence of mind in others which could any longer recollect milking-time and folding-time, could still hear the cows lowing to be milked at the door, the sheep needing penning down in the valley of the brook. It almost seemed a slight and a cruelty to his darling to attend to these things, to regard the future or the present, or anything but the moaning and the tossing of that dear sufferer—for any eye, or heart, or hand, to watch, and tend, and tremble, and ache, with a less fearful anxiety *than his own.*

After all this storm of distress in the house of

Llandefelach, and the quiet *cwm* of the Glasnaut, I had the great pleasure of seeing the restored child and father lying on the sunny sod slanting down to the foamy little brook, fringed with cowslips and harebells; the former nearly well and quite happy, surrounded with almost a toyshop; the various toys procured from a distant town, the promised rewards of good conduct in taking the requisite remedies.

Again I visited that valley and spot. I saw the father with folded arms walking thoughtfully, rather sullenly on by himself, and little Peter calling after him to stop for him, he being still too feeble to hasten much. The father stopped at last; but rather, I thought, as if ashamed that I should see his inattention to the boy, than moved by his eager and half-reproachful call. Never shall I forget the *then* inexplicable fall and change of that man's countenance as it met mine, as he paused, perplexed between reluctance to indulge his child with the usual "jump" as he begged to be "carried," and his shame under my observation of his altered manner toward him—how altered!—and the child more beautiful than ever! for the paleness left by illness harmonised with a certain amiability and gentleness, the fruits, perhaps, of a half-developed superior mind, which my small patient exhibited.

"What has my little friend here done, David?" I inquired. "*Noth*ing very bad, I am sure,"—and *the blue and speak*ing eyes of Peter, suffused each

with a tear, seconded my question, earnestly gazing up at the rather stern and deeply-sorrowful face of the father.

"*Done?* God bless thee, boy, nothing—nothing! He has done nothing, sir,—as good a child as ever——" The child, delighted, mounted a little bank of wild thyme, ready for a spring into his arms, of which the unaccountable man, after half-extending his arms to his pretty supplicant, disappointed him, letting them slowly fall to his sides, and muttering, "Poor little fellow!—poor little—*wretch!*" Then he seated himself on the ground in strange absence of mind, as if forgetting me, his child, everything.

"I should have thought, David, *your* heart would have bled to draw tears from those beautiful eyes," and I tried to console him by my kiss and a present for the want of his father's.

Suddenly the latter sprang up out of his disconsolate reverie, and he broke forth in a hollow voice of frightful energy.

"*Does* not my heart bleed then? Have *I* shed no tears? Sir, for every tear that my cruelty draws from his, mine shed hundreds—in the night, sir,—in the dead of night,—*lonely*—long and lonely nights! He is no longer my little bedfellow now; oh! no more now—never more! If ever agony did force blood from a wretch's eyes, I have wept blood!"

While he raved thus, his large melancholy eye

were fixed on the brook; he seemed to be rather in a passionate soliloquy than addressing me, although answering me; and, after a pause, he wept and trembled like an infant, adding in a quieter tone:—"Would to God we had again one bed, even this earth! one grave, one death-hour, to lie shroud by shroud, as hand in hand we used to sleep sweetly! O my boy!—my boy! I had been happy to see you die a few short weeks ago, to suck in death from thy poor black lips, and lay me down for ever by thy side—oh! yes, *then*, while I could have said, 'Farewell, *my* boy!' But now—oh! now——" He broke off there, and fixed a stern, yet, I thought, a sort of shamefaced look on me, and recalled by my presence, as it seemed, to more self-recollection, he started, and exclaimed, "How have I been talking to you, a stranger!"

But, lest this change in our master-shepherd should be as bewildering to the reader as it then was to me, let me briefly supply the explanation.

During the boy's convalescence, David, in his fulness of joy, had invited the mother to visit their child. After a sort of reconciliation, the old source of contention (the question with which parent he should live) produced a fresh quarrel. It had happened that Peter was a seven months' child, without very manifest signs of such prematurity. The *malignity of* Mrs. Beynon's brother, a brutal *sort of grazier* and drover, had led him to goad his

enemy, David, by taunts, at the expense of his sister's character; in short, he had insinuated that the real father of the child was the man who (as David Beynon told me) had wooed her prior to marriage. At this fatal interview, that unhappy mother, either wishing to estrange her husband from Peter, and so effect her object, or urged by mere fury of revenge, forgot decency and herself, and her son's welfare, so far as to avow the truth of this scandal raised by her brother—to prove to the selfish father, who had engrossed to himself their common object of love, that it was in fact hers, and hers only, so that he had been hugging to his heart his bane and his dishonour in what he deemed his pride and blessing.

This was a tempting species of revenge, too sweet and keen in point for her mood of the moment to resist. David, breaking up the interview with terrible curses on her head, from that moment never looked into those sweet and innocent eyes without seeing there the image of that man's countenance, who he believed had wronged him. Those pretty orbs, into which he had rarely looked without an impulse to implant kisses on both, were now become inhabited by a smiling devil—a face that seemed to leer upon him, as the fool and dotard who had fostered another's offspring for his own. That man's eyes, too, were blue; Peter's were of a lovely blue. The mother's eyes were, indeed, of *that* colour; but David could and would no longer

see that mother's eyes in those; for "trifles light as air," &c.

The dreadful condition of feelings here depicted has never, that I am aware, filled a page in the biography of human hearts, prolific as is our age of all sorts of histories, real and fanciful, and far-fetched as are the sources of excitement in many of them. To those, then, who may regard in the light of incidents any new and strange harrowing terms of passion in the mind and heart, it may not be uninteresting to hear a few of the sentiments expressed by our humble hero in a cooler moment, when he had reposed his sad secret with me while we wandered together near the house.

"To find out that we have been cherishing a foul fallen thing, instead of the white blessing we fancied ours in a faithful wife, must be a great trial, but more bearable than mine. A *childless* man, who makes such a discovery, suffers a great shock, but not like mine! He at least knows the worst, and he sees the whole of his misery. It is no longer *she*, the pure and beautiful thing he loved, and he begins to loathe, to hate her, and that 's his cure. But as for me, what cure is for me? How can I hate *him*, innocent soul? How look on his fair forehead, see his sweet smile, and hate? Sweet child! what has he done that I should hate *him?* And yet—yet," he added, in a hollow whisper, that had in it I know not what of piteous horror, "I feel I can—I feel—I —*hate!*"

The terrible conflict within of opposing feelings here disfigured his face as with an ugly mask. I started at the transfiguration, and for the moment fancied I saw before me the loving murderer of a loving child—that child so recently the object of a love amounting almost to a frenzied passion!

"I feel I hate," he murmured on. But is it a cure to *me?* No, no; but a very hell of pain! Even the man who *has* children does not suffer like me. He may be made a lone man of a sudden by a wife's crime, but his children—his undoubted own—are left him still. The children of his happy early days, when she was good and faithful, *they* are not altered by her fault. They are round his hearth still to soothe him for his loss; he sees nothing in their eyes but their mother as she looked before she sinned, such as she was when he led her home over his threshold, to live and die with him, as he hoped. But what is left to me? What do I see when I look into that boy's eyes, where I turned for all my comfort, and all my joy? Oh, sir, what see *I* there?" And the father's features assumed an aspect of the intensest loathing and hate.

Argument, with so fatal an impression, was vain.

"Now, tell me, doctor, if you can," he resumed vehemently, "how is this to be borne, or what am I to do? You cured him once, can you cure me? All your art is for bodies; yet there are plagues, fevers, cancers of a man's mind more unbearable far than

any the body suffers. To shun what I cannot live without; to drive him from me that I couldn't bear an hour from my sight; I say, who can bear this? Is it a state to be borne by a creature that the Almighty has gifted with the power to live or die—to die—or kill? No—no, you cannot tell me what to do—how to bear it; not you nor all mankind will ever find a cure for such a state of living damnation as this!"

From that day the wretched father, wandering and muttering to himself, absented himself almost wholly from home and Peter, hiding his misery in the deeper chasms of fractured rocks, by the high sources of the waterfalls, in solitudes and shadows, savage and solitary, and gloomy as his view of life or death to come. Whether it arose from some neglect to which the tenderly-reared but now deserted boy became exposed by this desertion, or that his sensitive nature, pining under the change in his father's feelings, and not yet wholly recovered from the effects of his illness, the fact was, from one of these two causes, a relapse took place, and my poor little patient was once more a prisoner of the sick chamber.

Meanwhile the wife, who had inflicted all this agony on the father, was suffering scarcely less. Even the fulness of revenge, indulged against those for whom love still lingers in the heart (and such *was the case with* Margaret Beynon) is like the

recoil of a gun in an unskilful hand, which, bursting with its overcharge, proves more fatal to the party aiming to wound than to the object aimed at. A terrible sort of compunction preyed on her mind from the moment of her fatal, self-criminating folly. As soon as news reached her (at the distance of some miles) of the new illness of the child (she being at the time herself dangerously ill), she dispatched a most earnest request for an interview with her husband. He at last reluctantly assented, and they met.

Their meeting was solemn and affecting. She extended a thin and pallid hand toward her husband, while she sat propped in the bed for shortness of breath. He stopped, reluctant even to be near her. He was come a long way from his boy—*his* boy, as melted by pity, he now, under his illness, could not bear but to call him. His heart was full of him, his thoughts were all on him; the more so that, being now out of sight, that fatal conceit of a likeness no longer could have the effect of chilling or enraging his heart. At home he had been agonised between his longing to act to him the part of a nurse, as before, and his half-maniacal impression that every one knew the secret of the child's paternity, which forbade his manly and proud mind to become the apparent dupe of another, by thus cherishing another's offspring with a father's fondness. Thus tortured at home and abroad, David,

altered, haggard, unshorn, and stern, recoiled from that fatal woman. He stood aloof, and saw, unmoved (if he saw at all), the spectacle of a fearful hemorrhage in her who had been the wife of his choice, and neither extended his hand in return, nor could bear to speak to, or even look at her.

"Pray come nearer," she said faintly; "I cannot lift up my voice, and I have much to say, and little time to——"

He advanced one step, no more.

Panting for breath, she needed a helping arm to upraise her in the bed, and looked imploringly toward his—that which for a brief space had enfolded, had upheld her, and tenderly too, and might still have embraced her, but for a vindictive brother—but he still withholding his help, she desperately, in a sort of angry despair, erected herself by one effort, and brushed away one tear from her eye, that he might not see it stand there. The exertion caused a fresh and more frightful effusion of the vital fluid. The husband, somewhat touched, perhaps, by her reproachful look and wild action, stooped to hand her the cup, already nearly filled with the crimson horror. Even this tardy and cold courtesy affected the unhappy wife; she wept bitterly.

"Once *more, David,* but once, support me *upright. A little* touch of your arm will lift me

higher, or I cannot say what I would not die without saying for all the world."

David felt once more the touch of that hand (in its unnatural bloodless white), which he had received before God at the altar, and all the past came over him like a dream just remembered. The wedded happiness of a year, the after solitude of years; the strange transfer of his whole soul's affection to an infantile object; his pensive sort of bliss in the few years passed with him; the recent shocking wrench from his heart of that last consolation. Her frailty and its consequence, more fatal than itself, were now forgotten in this retrospect of a moment, and he even returned that hand's pressure while awaiting the disclosure she had to make.

"Oh! husband, hear me with patience while I confess——"

It was a luckless beginning.

"Heaven's curse on your confessings!" he broke forth. "I 'll hear no more of them! Would to God I had never heard them! Such confessions as yours, after such treachery, are fitter for hell than heaven. Your confessions have made me childless, and your child fatherless; made me unnatural to him—his beauty hateful to me! Having fooled me so long, you should have held your peace for ever, and died in the sin and secrecy of incontinence, as you lived in the shame of it! Truth from your lips is a crime *now*; it has wrought a more devilish

mischief than the foulest lie ever did! Lie on *now*, you wretched woman, and die in your perjury—you 'll be sooner pardoned by a pitying God than for these accursed confessions."

Faint, and wringing her hands, she had not breath to interrupt him, except with a word or two.

"Oh, hear me! Oh, I was false!"

"False to me! Don't I know it? Why again? Have you not said it already to kill all the father in my heart? Wretch! I tell you once again, you ought *now* to persuade me, were it possible, that you never *had* been false! Restore me my blessed ignorance, if you can; fool me again into the belief that he is my own; cheat me to take him back to my bosom and bed! Would you make your peace with God before you die?—die with that merciful lie upon your lips, crying, 'He is your own—he is your own!' but no—it is too late."

With brilliant, yet ghastly smile, and her hectic blush now heightened to a burning crimson, Margaret sprang up of her own sudden strength, supplied by the violence of her emotion, and threw her arms round her husband's neck ere he was aware, and cried,—

"And so he is! on the word and oath of a dying woman he is your own! I meant, that I confess a wicked lie told to you lately; I meant, that I was false *when I joined* my cruel brother in his wicked *lie; but you stopped* me short. And I was false

when I accused myself—on my life, and my soul's life, I was!" He shook his head as if incredulous. "You don't believe me, then?" said she, still wringing her hands. "Then it is indeed too late. My poor wronged little boy!"

"Foolish, miserable woman!" he said mournfully, "did you think me earnest when I said you ought to deceive me? Are you obeying that foolish, wild injunction of mine? 'Twas but my passion."

"Alas! what can I say?—how undo what I have done?—and my breath is spent. Oh, God of truth, speak for me! Some pitying mother, now a saint in heaven, witness for me; whisper to his heart, convince my husband, do my dear child right before I die!"

A dawn of comfort grew visible in the gloomy eyes of the father.

"Wife!" he said solemnly, "remember—this is perhaps your deathbed."

"I do—I do! I hope it is, for I have nothing to live for; and, revenging God so deal with me as I speak true or false when I say—he *is* your own! he is your own! And *I* too, I am—*was*—your own, ever yours; but that you regard not. I was true to you, David,—loved you—love you, David *bach!* I came to your bosom even as I left my mother's at weaning time, pure as a child; and I go to my bed in the cold ground just as I left yours! Believe no other, David,—do me justice when I am there laid.

husband dear! I feel we shall have no more dispute about the keeping of poor Peter. Death will soon settle that now—for ever."

David pored on her face as she spoke, as if to read her inmost soul. He was a suspicious man, and deep melancholy now made him slow to hope, and, therefore, to believe.

"Margaret!" he said tremulously, and held her hand, "I implore you not to deceive me in kindness! Truth—truth is what I pant for. Can you —dare you take an oath that that sweet and precious child is mine?"

"For God's sake bring me a Bible! There lies one—hand it me, quick!" she exclaimed, smiling brightly, though her agitation increased the frightful expectoration every moment. "Invent any form of oath the most dreadful," she continued. "On the soul's peril of a dying woman, one who knows herself dying, I kiss this word of God, and swear he is your child. Look! I have sealed it with my blood; the impression of a bloody lip is on the leaf! Yours, David, your own dear boy! Now shall I be believed? Now do you—can you forgive my foul —my unnatural lie? If you can indeed, kiss me once—once more in token of it, and that we part in —peace, in love——"

"A hundred, my own dear Margaret," he cried rapturously; "*from* my heart I forgive you—from *my soul I believe* you," and kissed her as rap-

turously, while the happiness of being at last believed lit up the careworn features of the wife with such a beauty from within, that every vestige of sickness and impending death flew before it.

"You have heaved a mountain from off my breast, my dear—dear Peggy. 'Twas I who wronged *you*, by separating you from our darling. But we shall have no more dispute; we shall all three be happy yet."

She shook her head and wept, for her extreme exhaustion now admonished her against indulging that hope of life which this new incident prompted so powerfully.

"Now, hear me swear, Margaret, solemnly swear, and believe me, you never had rival in my heart or bed, but that dear child—never! You shall come to Llandefelach,—we will nurse him together, —we will——"

As he spoke, the chamber-door was thrown open in haste, and one of his shepherds entered, who had ridden after him in haste, to say that the "woman-kind" thought there was a "change" in little Peter, by which expression David too well knew that the Welsh attendants mean some indication of approaching death, although their observation is sometimes fallacious. To David the words struck dismay through his very soul, and a ghastliness like death's own overspread his face, while all the husband forsook his heart, and he once more saw only

before him the woman who had estranged him from his child, who had caused him to be at this moment at a distance from him.

"And *I* must be here—at this horrid distance! I must leave him among strangers in perhaps his last——," and he scowled a dumb curse of infuriated misery at his ill-fated wife, who once more seemed to him the murderess of his life's companion —his life's darling.

Abruptly he broke from her. Not a kiss, or embrace, or word more did he vouchsafe, but almost while her face yet remained turned after him, he vanished through the door. She was shocked by the sound of his horse's hoofs rattling with reckless and dangerous speed along the naked and rugged rock of the mountain track, which gave access to the wild residence of a mountain farm which she had chosen. Her heart seemed to die within her as the sound died away in the high distance of the declivity he was ascending.

Little did the impatient father see or heed of his road except its dreadful length. An obstructed journey of many mountain miles was before him. He pictured to himself his darling turning his poor wan face incessantly to the door for him each time it opened; he heard him faintly asking for him; he imagined his life ebbing fast away, and only strangers round; and every craggy water-course, every broken *gully, where the dingy* peat-water formed a rivulet,

every round of pale green verdure indicating the dangerous quagmire which he must avoid; the clogging soil of the mountain's base, spongy with springs: all these seemed to his sad eye and soul as so many inhuman foes deaf and blind to his agony, and groan, and sweat, rising up between him and that house (that deathbed to his fancy), wherein and by which he had already arrived in mind, and stood—a childless man. His soul, indeed, was there, but round him, eternally recalling it, was the same dismal far-stretching distance, the fading horizon of mountain rock (for it grew dark), while the only life near was that of creatures alien to the nature of man, and his strong sympathies—the kite, the fern-owl, and the dismal bittern of the dark brown marsh. No severer trial of mortal patience can perhaps exist than that he was doomed to suffer; that constant conflict between the fond spirit stretching forward, and throwing behind all obstacles, and the hindering body, in its gradual, tardy, laborious progress, impeded by every one, even the least.

This trial, however, like all human trials, had its end. He approached his house. And now every unkind look and tone of the last few dismal weeks, which he had been betrayed into toward his uncomplaining, unoffending boy, was to be atoned for in one delightful embrace. For David had made a *helpmate*—a companion of him, young as he was; *and* therefore felt no less compunction and real re-

morse toward him, although a child, than toward an adult. With beating heart he pulled the string of the door-latch, paused to listen, and had the joy to find all noiseless within, proving that at least the worst had not yet occurred—that death was not in the house. It seemed that such an event must have caused something at least of confusion, akin to that tremendous commotion in his own nature which its mere conceit had been producing during the whole of his journey. He was already at his child's bedside ere any knew of his return. All was dim, by the light of the small rush taper. What was his sudden ease of heart to see one woman, only a nurse, tying on his darling's cap, in all tranquillity! The very suddenness of that ease, that stop of his heart's long palpitation, was of itself a shock.

"Going to sleep, my precious? One kiss first, mine own darling,—*mine own* sweet boy! Forgive foolish father,—forgive him all his cruel——"

Bending over him in the dusk, he saw a pretty, quiet smile on the wan little face, but it was not at him. The lips had a dreadful formality in their closure; it was the *chin-band* applied to the falling jaw which the woman was tying, and which he mistook for the cap. The truth flashed upon him just as he uttered the word father, and he knew that he was *now*, indeed, no father. The frightful appearance *of two eyeholes* instead of eyes (those *beautiful eyes!*) produced by two small coins, which

the woman had placed there (according to idle custom), confirmed the sad impression. He jerked back his head in horror, for his own lips and those of clay, his eyes and those eye-sockets, had nearly met. He uttered one deep groan, expressive of combined agony and horror, and fell at full length on the floor. It was but a minute's respite. Again he was on his feet, standing at the bedfoot, like some effigy, with its stony eyes fixed on vacancy, gazing stupefied on the sad object which the officious nurse had now covered with a sheet, so that he looked only on the ghastly outline of the small corpse, with projecting face and feet.

Up to the day of his child's burial David hardly left the fatal chamber, and moved about, looking a thousand dreadful emotions, but venting none in almost total dumbness. He would not look on that last frightful duty imposed by a foul and dire necessity for the sake of survivors, but mounting horse, rode off in the direction of Cwm Carneddan, his wife's residence. Whether revenge for the fatal lie which had desolated it was up and raging in his breaking heart, and hurried him toward that miserable mother, or that a reeling mind led him to rush abroad without object, while a depth of earth was being interposed between that fair object, now becoming a horror and an offence, and the living, whom its beauty had so lately gratified—from one of these causes, David was absent till the middle of

the second night. But of his return I shall speak in the conclusion.

I was summoned in haste soon after to Llandefelach. I was led upstairs, where I found the haggard form of the master, apparently searching everywhere for something lost, and followed mournfully by two of his shepherds. He turned his hollow eyes on me with a look of confused recollection, then giving up his search, said disconsolately, "He is not here: can you tell me where is Peter—*my* Peter? I look across the world, and he is not there. I look up to heaven, and ask him of God, and God will not hear me—not answer me. I listen for his little voice all night, and cannot hear it; yet I hear it calling in my heart for ever. I shall never see him more,—never hear it more!"

The unhappy man had, I learned, reached Carneddan, and found his wife in her coffin. The shock of his furious and abrupt parting had quickly overpowered her remains of life. Whether or not his intellects were at that time already gone must for ever remain unknown, and unknown, therefore, what was the aim of his visit. On his return he was wild in his deportment and looks; he had lost his hat; he appeared to have been immersed in a bog; his horse was discovered loose on the hill, among the pits of black peat (or *mawn*), where, doubtless, *his frenzied rider had* passed one dismal night.

Some years after the death of the child I was

entering a town at a little distance from Llandefelach, one fine summer's night, by a cloudless moon. A peal of bells (a rather rare accompaniment of our Welsh churches), reached my ears, from the church seen dim on an eminence above the humble town, shrouded by venerable trees, from amidst which the mossy thatches of the houses, in their grey antiquity, peeped through thick foliage. Cows wandered about the rude streets of half-green rock, steeply sloping down to a little river tumbling in a craggy channel, and keeping a perpetual gentle roar, which, deadened by the banks, produced an effect as lulling, if not as melancholy, as those distant bells. The voices of a few children, tempted out to play round a huge oak tree, on a greensward in the middle of this lonely village town, alone broke the monotony of those mingled sounds, except when an owl was heard from a small ruin of a castle on a mound beyond that mountain brook.

Knowing this to be the native place of David Beynon, where his aged mother still resided, I thought of that unfortunate man, whom the last report I heard stated to be in the condition of raving insanity, in a receptacle for the mad. I thought of the time when he played like one of those little ones, round that tree, and obeyed the pretty summons, which I now heard from them, in English,—

"Boys and girls, come out to play,
Now the moon shines bright as day;" &c.

On their chanting their song I was startled by the sudden appearance of a tall old man, in tattered clothes, with long hair, and beard quite white, who had been sitting at the foot of the tree, and who, on the children pulling him by the withered hands, laughed shrilly, and awkwardly joined in their wild dance, to their seeming great amusement. Nothing but his stature, and something mournful and infantile in his half-hysterical laugh, distinguished his manners from those of the real children, whose companion, rather than sport, he seemed to be.

It was not till I had inquired about this poor harmless being at the rustic inn that I knew that this was David Beynon come home to his decrepit mother, to finish his mindless existence under the roof where it began.

RICHELIEU;

OR, THE CONSPIRACY.*

CARDINAL RICHELIEU was Premier of France;
He was keen as a fox, and you read at a glance,
In his phiz so expressive of malice and trick,
That he 'd much of the nature ascribed to Old Nick;
If a noble e'er dared to oppose him, instead
Of confuting his lordship, he whipped off his head:
He fixed his grim paw
Upon church, state, and law,
With as much cool assurance as ever you saw;
With his satire's sharp sting
He badgered the King,
Bullied his brother,
Transported his mother,
And (what is a far more astonishing case)
Not only pronounced him an ass to his face,
But made love to his Queen, and because she declined
His advances, gave out she was wrong in her mind!

* The writer of this metrical burlesque on Sir E. Bulwer Lytton's drama will be immediately recognised by all the readers of "The Ingoldsby Legends."—Ed.

Now the nobles of France, and still more the poor King,
Disliked, as was natural, this sort of thing;
The former felt shocked that plebeian beholders
Should see a peer's head fly so oft from his shoulders,
And the latter was constantly kept upon thorns
By the Cardinal's wish to endow him with horns;
Thus rankling with spite,
A party one night
Of noblemen met, and determined outright
(So enraged were the crew)
First, to murder Richelieu,
And, if needful, dispatch all his partisans too;
Next to league with the foes
Of the King, and depose
The fat-pated monarch himself, for a fool
Rebellion ne'er uses except as a tool.

On the night that Richelieu was thus marked out for slaughter,
He chanced to be tippling cold brandy and water
With one Joseph, a Capuchin priest—a sly dog,
And by no means averse to the comforts of grog,
As you saw by his paunch, which seemed proud to reveal
How exactly it looked like a fillet of veal.
They laughed and they quaffed, till the Capuchin's *nose*
(*'Twas a thorough*-bred snub) grew as red as a rose;

And, whenever it chanced that his patron, Richelieu,
Cracked a joke, even though it was not very new,
And pointed his smart conversational squibs
By a slap on Joe's back, or a peg in his ribs,
The priest, who was wonderfully shrewd as a schemer,
Would bellow with ecstasy, "'Gad, that 's a *screamer!*"
Thus they chatted away, a rare couple well met,
And were just tuning up for a pious duet,
When in rushed a spy,
With his wig all awry,
And a very equivocal drop in his eye,
Who cried (looking blue
As he turned to Richelieu)
"Oh, my lord, lack-a-day!
Here 's the devil to pay,
For a dozen fierce nobles are coming this way;
One of whom, an old stager, as sharp as a lizard,
Has threatened to stick a long knife in your gizzard,
While the rest of the traitors, I say it with pain,
Have already sent off a dispatch to Spain,
To state that his Majesty ceased to reign,
And order the troops all home again."

When his Eminence heard these tidings, "Go,"
He said in the blandest of tones to Joe,
"And if you can catch
The traitors' dispatch,

I swear—no matter how rich it be—
You shall have, dear Joe, the very next see!"
(*Nota bene*, whenever Old Nick is wishing
To enjoy the prime sport of parson-fishing,
He always, like Richelieu, cunning and quick,
Baits with a good fat bishopric!)

No sooner had Joe turned his sanctified back—
I hardly need add he was off in a crack—
Than up the grand stairs rushed the murderous pack,
Whereon the sly Cardinal, tipping the wink
To the spy, who was helping himself to some drink
At a side-table, said,
"Tell 'em I 'm dead;"
Then flew to his chamber, and popped into bed.
"What, dead?" roared the traitors. "I stuck him myself
With a knife which I snatched from the back-kitchen shelf,"
Was the ready reply
Of the quick-witted spy,—
Who in matters of business ne'er stuck at a lie.
"Huzza, then, for office!" cried one, and cried all,
"The government 's ours by the Cardinal's fall;"
And, so saying, the crew
Cut a caper or two,
Gave the spy a new fourpenny piece and withdrew.

Next day all the papers were full of the news,
Little dreaming the Cardinal's death was a *ruse*;
In parliament, too, lots of speeches were made,
And poetical tropes by the bushel displayed;
The deceased was compared to Ulysses and Plato,
To a star, to a cherub, an eagle, and Cato;
And 'twas gravely proposed by some gents in co
mittee
To erect him a statue of gold in the city;
But when an economist, caustic and witty,
Asked, "Gentlemen, pray
Who is to pay?"
The committee, as if by galvanic shock jolted,
Looked horrified, put on their castors, and bolted!

Meanwhile the shrewd traitors repaired in a bevy,
All buoyant with hope, to his Majesty's levee,
When, lo! as the King with anxiety feigned,
Was beginning to speak of the loss he 'd sustained,
In strutted Richelieu,
And the Capuchin too,
Which made each conspirator shake in his shoe;
One whispered a bystander, looking him through,
"By Jove, I can scarcely believe it! can you?"
Another cried, "Hang it, I thought 'twas a *do!*"
And a third muttered faintly, o'ercome by his fear,
"Talk of the devil, and he's sure to appear!"

When the King, who at first hardly trusted his
eyes,
Had somewhat recovered the shock of surprise,
He shook his thick head
At the Cardinal, and said,
In tones in which something of anger still lurked,
"How 's this? Why, good gracious, I thought you
were burked?"
"Had such been my fate," quickly answered
Richelieu,
"Had they made me a *subject*, the rascally crew,
My liege, they 'd have soon made another of you.
Look here!" and he pulled out the nobles' dispatch,
Who felt that for once they had met with their match,
And exclaiming, "'Od rot 'em,
The scoundrels, I 've got 'em!"
Read it out to the King from the top to the bottom.

Next morning twelve scaffolds, with axes of steel,
Adorned the fore-court of the sprightly Bastile;
And at midnight twelve nobles, by way of a bed,
Lay snug in twelve coffins, each *minus* a head—
A thing not uncommon with nobles, 'tis said.
Priest Joe got his see,
And delighted was he,
For the bishopric suited his taste to a T;
And Richelieu, the stern, unforgiving, and clever,
Bullied *king, church,* and people, more fiercely than
ever!

Such the theme which Sir Lytton
Has recently hit on,
To expand his rare fancy, and feeling, and wit on;
And the moral is this—if, conspiring in flocks,
Silly geese will presume to play tricks with a fox,
And strive by finesse to get rid of the pest,
They must always expect to come off second best!

PADDY FLYNN;

OR,

THE MISERIES OF DINING OUT.

BY JOHN SHEEHAN.

"If you have tears, prepare to shed them now."

"ALL the world knows the beautiful city of Cork, where they make long *drisheens* * and the best of porter," said our worthy and revered Vice-president Jonathan Buckthorn, winking knowingly at a promising young limb of the law from the second city of Ireland, and a namesake of the present "frost and fair" prophet of the skies and clerk of the weather.

"And the man who has been in Cork has something to boast of," dryly observed our one-eyed and thirsty poet-laureate, Pat Kelly, who sat *vis-à-vis* to Jonathan's gouty leg, stirring a replenished jorum of real Ennishowen, whilst his widowed luminary, at

* *Drisheen*, the pink of European sausages, "quo non præstantior alter," &c. 'Twere vain to attempt its description: it *must be tasted.*

an angle of forty-five, was watching, with more of a paternal than a mere chemical regard, the separation of the little particles of sugar from the parent lump, and the consequent amalgamation of the *utile dulci*; and the gentleman," continued this monocular personage, "who has rioted in delight over a yard of *drisheen*, and having diluted it with a foaming pot of Beamish and Crawford's best, can say of himself,

'ille impiger hausit
Spumantem *pewteram* et *potto* se proluit *all-o!*'*

has a delicious recollection which he never can forget whilst memory holds her empire, and he himself can intellectually enjoy the pleasures of mastication and deglutition.

Though the bard at cleaner shops, I own,†
May take his meal,
And with champagne may wash it down,
And—pay a deal,
He 'll never meet
A treat so sweet
From Clane to Derrynane,
As when first he supp'd at Molly's crib
In Blarney Lane:
And at every pause that nymph so glib
Cried, '*Hot again!*'"

This impudent impromptu, parodying so grossly one of the Little Bard of Erin's prettiest and purest,

* "Spumantem pateram et pleno se proluit auro."—VIRGIL.

† "Though the bard to purer fame may soar," &c.—LOVE'S YOUNG DREAM.

at once "set the table in a roar," not of laughter, but indignation, producing something like the strange effect of a hand-grenade thrown into the centre of a town-council under the new Corporation Act. It was quelled, however, after the lapse of some minutes, by the paramount voice of the president, PHIL (which name, by the by, he always used to sign to all important documents connected with the club "Philander"), at whose command Father O'Leary, the chaplain, delivered, in Pat Kelly's regard, such a lecture on the impiety of parodying the national bard as very few after-dinner assemblies had ever yet the good fortune to be edified with. That he produced little or no effect upon the irreclaimable heretic to whom he addressed himself, more in sorrow than in anger, by no means took away from the prælectional merits of the excellent divine, which were observed to ascend invariably towards the sublime of eloquence as the proceedings of the evening advanced towards the small hours.

Of his reverence's character and history, as well as of those of the president, vice-president, poet-laureate, and others, who combined to form the far-famed Comet Club of the Sister Island, we shall have more to say, as circumstances and an historical regard to its transactions shall introduce them into our series. But at present to our tale, which is the *vice-president's*, and which he resumed as Father O'Leary resumed his seat, mightily pleased with

himself and all the world, not even excluding Pat Kelly, whom he loved for the reason that he chastised him, and who was at the moment making a silent appeal to the only friend whom he himself considered he had in the room,—namely, the bottle.

"In the beautiful city of Cork," said Jonathan, "as I said before, there lived, about forty years ago, a very respectable retailer of snuff and tobacco, Pat Flynn by name, but, for shortness' sake, called Paddy Flynn, who had but recently turned to that occupation, having descended too far into the vale of years to follow his former trade or 'profession,' as he himself always and most studiously designated it, of 'taycher of dancing, good manners, and all other kinds of music,' in which he had gained a goodly celebrity. Paul was a plain homely man of the good old school, portly in his person, and eccentric in his dress, and so wedded to old times and old manners, that it was impossible to get him to "look like a Christian,' as poor Mrs. Flynn—the heavens be her bed and the clouds her blankets!—used to say, when she would tease him to lay aside his bushed wig, and his ruffles, and three-cornered hat, all of which contributed in a great degree to the grotesqueness of his appearance. But these little oddities had pleasing associations for Mr. Flynn's recollections. He put them on religiously every day; and seating himself after breakfast on the pipe-chest opposite the shop-door, he commenced

humming *Nora Creina*, in a self-pleasing, drone-like under-growl, while he kept anything but time with his heels swinging against the side of the chest as they hung down, but reached not the flags of the shop floor.

"Mrs. Flynn, good soul, minded the shop, scolded the kitchen-wench, abused the cow-boy, mended the stockings, kept the day-book, saved the dripping and the candle-ends; in short, did everything to render her dear spouse comfortable and good-humoured, who scarcely minded anything but his corns and his customers, when any such dropped in.

"One forenoon, as Paddy was seated on his well-beloved elevation, and Mrs. Flynn was washing up the breakfast tackle in a little 'glory hole' off the shop, a tall, distinguished-looking personage entered, and asked to see Mr. Flynn.

"'Well, sir,' says Paddy, stopping short his *Nora Creina* with a sudden grunt, as he turned his head sideways, and cocked his near eye at the customer, 'and so you *do* want to see Mr. Flynn, sir?'—'Yes, sir,' was the reply.—'It 's likely you don't know him, thin, sir,' said Paddy. —'I have not that pleasure yet,' answered the stranger.—'Pleasure! Oh, aisy, now! Pleasure, avich, did you say? Sure and isn't it myself that 's *spayking to* you all the time?'—'Oh, *indeed! Then are* you really the Mr. Flynn whom *I am seeking?*'—'I don't know, faiks, whether

you 're seeking me or not, for you know your own business best, sir; but my name is Pat Flynn, an' nobody else, barring that they changed me at nurse.'—'Then, Mr. Flynn, you *are* the man I have been seeking. I am happy to see you, and to make your acquaintance. My name is Beamish.* I live on the Parade.'

"PADDY. 'I am mighty proud of it, sir, and it 's often I heard tell of your great family and your porther; but may I be so bowld as to ax you, sir, just for information, what business you have wid your humble sarvint?'

"MR. BEAMISH. 'Business?—oh, nothing of what is called business whatever. You mistake me, Mr. Flynn; I am merely come to pay my respects to you.'

"PADDY. 'Oh, indeed! Why, then, that 's very odd—isn't it, though?'

"MR. BEAMISH. 'O dear, no. The fact is, I am under a deep and lasting obligation to a son of yours, whom I had the happiness—I should say the extreme good fortune—of meeting in Paris.'

"PADDY. Ah-ha! Is it our Tom, sir, in Paris? Aisy, aisy—that 's impossible. Sure it 's in France he is, my darling.'

* Mr. Beamish, the father of the present member for Cork. This it is necessary to state for the sake of historical justice, as well as to assure the reader that the story from beginning to end is a true one.

"MR. BEAMISH. 'Well, well, my dear sir, it 's all the same.'

"PADDY. 'How the devil, sir, saving your presence, could it be the same? Paris and France the same thing! If it is, it 's mighty odd entirely. But here 's Tom's jo-graphy in the drawer under the counter next the till. Ou-wow! as the fox said to the hen-roost, maybe I haven't travelled all the way from Bristol to Waterford without knowing something about latitude and longitude.'

"MR. BEAMISH. 'Well, well, we shall not fall out about geography. The point in question is, have you not a son?'

"PADDY. 'Mrs. Flynn says I have, sir.'

"MR. BEAMISH. 'And his name Thomas?'

"PADDY. 'The priest christened him Thomas, but we always called him Tom for convaynience; and his mother's brother—the Lord rest his sowl in glory!—was called Tom for shortness.'

"MR. BEAMISH. 'Then I have had the pleasure of meeting him abroad, where he saved my life, and was so kind and attentive to me, that he has bound me in gratitude to him for ever. It is my wish to return the compliment to him and to you by every means in my power.'

"PADDY. 'Eh! he! he! ha! ha! ha! hi! hi! hi! The heavens above be praised and blessed for all *their bounties* and blessings! And so you saw *poor Tom abroad*, sir? (Aside.) Arrah, Betty,

jewel, throw a one side those kimmeens of crockery, and come and spayke to the jintleman: sure he seen Tom abroad. (To Mr. Beamish.) Is Tom as fat and as healthy as when he left ould Ireland, sir?'

"MR. BEAMISH. 'I really cannot say, as I did not see him when he quitted his native country; but I am happy to assure you that he looked very well when I took my leave of him a short time back.'

"PADDY. 'Well, the Lord be praised! I 'll be bound he was axing you about the beautiful crap of praties he sowed in the field by the brook afore he wint away, sir?'

"MR. BEAMISH. 'No, I rather think he *did not* mention *that* circumstance. It was as my physician he attended me.'

"PADDY. 'Oh, I daar say, sir. Tom 's a clever chap, and a great physicianer. He 'd pick up anything, sir, from tare and tret to trigonometry; and as for Latin and Greek, he 'd bother the bishop at them before he was bigger than a huckster's pint. Betty, darling, dust the ould chair there for the jintleman. Oh, she 'll never come. Sit down, sir, if you playse. And so Tom is grown clever and lusty?'

"MR. BEAMISH. 'Why, he really looks the picture of rude health.'

"PADDY. 'Rude!—rude, did you say, sir? He was rared clane and daycent, and——'

"MR. BEAMISH. 'Oh, really, Mr. Flynn, you mistake my meaning. I merely wished to say that he was in excellent health.'

"PADDY. 'Ay, ay, it 's quite sartin that he 'll fall into flesh; he takes afther his mother, sir. (Aside.) Arrah blur-an-ouns, Betty, come out of that glory-hole: your ould face is clane enough. One would think that you 'd never have done scrubbing it. (To Mr. Beamish.) Sit down, sir, sit down, if you playse.'

"MR. BEAMISH. 'Excuse me; I had rather not at present; for I have some calls to make, and my time is somewhat limited. I shall be delighted to tell you some pleasing news about your son, if you will do me the favour of dining with me to-day.'

"PADDY. 'Oh, Mr. Baymish, is it in airnest you are, or making fun of me?'

"MR. BEAMISH. 'By no means, my dear sir; I shall be delighted if you dine with me, and I shall have the pleasure of introducing you to Mrs. Beamish.'

"PADDY. 'In troth, sir, to be plain wid you, I 'd rather dine at home.'

"MR. BEAMISH. 'Oh, come, come, Mr. Flynn, you must make yourself at home with me. Upon my honour you shall—indeed, you must dine with me to-day.'

"PADDY. 'And what time do you dine, sir?'

MR. BEAMISH. 'At six o'clock.'

"PADDY. 'Oh, murder! I'd never be able to howld out till six. I couldn't go, sir. I never get my dinner later than two o'clock. Sure, sir, a man ought to have a couple of tumblers of punch and his tay under his waistcoat at six. Does Tom keep such bad hours?—though I daar say he does. When he was at home he was just as outlandish, for he wouldn't be done his breakfast till he'd be near going to bed, though he used to begin it when he'd get up, and he made but the one male in the day, but it lasted from morning till night.'

"MR. BEAMISH. 'But about dinner to-day, Mr. Flynn? I really will take no excuse. You must dine with us at six.'

"PADDY. 'Arrah, Betty, jewel, d'ye hear all this?'

"BETTY. 'You can't refuse the jintleman's politeness, Pat. (Aside in a whisper.) Go, Paddy, mavourneen; it may sarve Tom.'

"PADDY. 'Faith, and may be so. Well, sir, as you won't be put off, I'll go dine with you at six.'

"MR. BEAMISH. 'Agreed, then, Mr. Flynn. At six, remember, we shall expect you. Good-by!'

"And here Mr. Beamish made his bow and withdrew. As the subsequent part, however, of my narration cannot be well given in the third person, I must leave it to Mr. Flynn himself to describe the memorable events of the evening. His own account of the dining-out part of the affair was after the following fashion.

"Whin Misthur Baymish left the shop, by gor, I wint and brushed up my duds, and polished my pumps, and brightened my buckles, and thin, when at last I put them on, didn't I look clane and dacent. 'You 're looking young again, Paddy dear,' says Betty, wid a tear in her eye as big as a gooseberry. But when two o'clock came, I felt something inside of me crying 'cupboard.' At three, I felt morthal hungry. At four, I couldn't stand it out much longer; but at five, I thought the bowels would fall out of me. Howsomdever, says I to myself, 'Paddy Flynn, avich, you must bear it all, for the sake of your son Tom and his mother;' so I passed over the mighty inconvaynience as well as I could, although I thought it was a week long, till Betty tould me that it was a quarter to six. Thin I jumped up off the chest, and says I to myself, 'Paddy Flynn, it 's time for you to be off, for you have a good mile of ground to walk to the Parade.' Well, then, I took my cane in my fist, and rowled up my bran new pair of gloves in the other for fear of dirtying them, and I sauntered along quite leisurely, that I mightn't get into a sweat, until I came to the Parade. 'Now, Paddy,' says I, 'you 're just going for to make your first step into high life; the Lord send you safe over the throuble,' says I, looking about for Mr. Baymish's door. I had the *number of the house* reckoned on my fingers, so I *couldn't be mistaken*. At last I made it out, and

the divil a finer house I ever laid my two morthal eyes upon than that same, wid its beautiful clane steps, that you could take your tay off, and its iligant hall-door, big enough for an archbishop, and the full of your fist of a brass rapper upon it, not to say nothing at all of a purty little plate that was on it, with a beautiful printed B, and an E, and an A, *agus* an M,' says I, 'and that makes BEAM, all the world over; and thin an I, and an S, *agus* an H—right,' says I, '*agus* a BEAM, *agus* an ISH,—BEAMISH, to be sure.' *Whack* wint the rapper in a minute, wid a single pelt that would astonish a twintypenny nail, if it only got it fair on the head. The door flew open before you could bless yourself. 'D'ye mayne to knock down the house, Misther Impudence?' said a mighty fine-looking gintleman, wid a green coat and red breeches, popping out his powdered pate, and putting his fat chops close up to my face. 'No sir, I don't,' says I, quite politely. 'I wouldn't hurt a hair of its head, honey, nor a dog belonging to it.'—'Thin what do you want?' says he to myself, quite snappishly intirely. 'I want Mr. Baymish,' says I, just as indepindantly. 'You can't see him,' says *Saucepan*, slapping the door in my face. 'Blur an' turf!' says I, 'and may be so. Isn't this purty tratement I 'm suffering for *you*, Tom, avich?' Well, I scratched my head, and waited a bit, and rapped again for Tom's sake. The same nice man opened it in

a jiffy. 'You're a smart chap, I don't think,' says I, winking at him good-humouredly; and in spite of his angry looks, I made bowld just to step past him into the hall. 'I believe this is the house,' says I, 'and this is the right side of the door.'—'D'ye think so?' says he. You'd betther get out again, thin, as quick as you came in,' says he.—'Not immaydiately,' says I; and then I ris my voice like a counsellor's, and says I, 'I 'm come to dine wid Mr. and Mrs. Baymish at six, and, begging your pardon, sir, I think this is a mighty quare welcome.' —'What 's your name?' says he.—'Pat Flynn,' says I.—'Beg your pardon, *sir*,' says he.—'No offince,' says I, as I thought he looked frightened.—'Walk this way,' says he, bowing and scraping towards the stairs like a Frenchman at a fiddle. 'Will you show me your hat, sir?' says he.—'And welcome, sir,' says I: 'it was made by my own cousin jarmin, Pat Beaghan, of Patrick Street, and cost but twelve and sixpence; rale bayver, your sowl, and as honest a man as ever you dealt with—indeed, he is a mighty dacent man.'—'Oh, sir, I beg your honour's pardon,' says he, tittering wid the laughing; 'you mistake me, sir, intirely,' says he: 'playse to give me your hat.'—'For what? Would you have me go home in the night air to Betty without a hat?' says I.—'O no, sir, you don't understand me,' says he; 'I merely want *to put* by your hat for you till you are *going home.*'—'*The* divil trust your rogue's face!'

says I, 'how mighty polite you are. Can't I take care of it myself?'—'Oh, sir,' says he, thrusting his hand out for it, 'every gintleman that dines here layves his hat wid me.'—'Then if I must, I must,' says I; 'there it 's for you, and my blessing wid it; but by the holy poker, if you don't put it by in a clane place, I 'll give you the lingth and breadth of this,' says I, shaking my cane, which was whipped out of my hand by another powdered gintleman; and before I could say *trapstick*, it was in safe keeping. 'Take care of it for you, sir,' says he, grinning at me. 'Thank'ee, sir,' says I, grinning back at him. 'Your gloves, sir,' says the black foot-boy. 'O Lord!' says I, 'has your mother many more of you, Snowball? Can't I put my own gloves in my own pocket, you baste?' says I.—'O no, sir,' says the naygur, 'dat's not de way in dis house, massa.' Well, I gave him my gloves, and the first chap—he that opened the door and looked like a drum-major—beckoned me after him up the stairs, wid a shamrogue carpet on them as green as nature's own petticoat of a May-day morning, and as soft as the daisies, and so delicate and iligant that you wouldn't hear a robin's foot if he hopped on it, much less the sound of your own. Up thin I climbed for high life and for Tom's sake, and whin I got to the top step, I pulled up the waist-band of my breeches to give myself ayse, for I was desperately out of breath. The dirty blackguard in the red breeches afore me

never minded me at all, but flung open a shining mahogany door, and shouted out as loud as a tinker at a fair, '*Mr. Flynn!*' says he.—'Here I am, sir,' says I, quite angry; 'and what the divil do you want wid me in such a hurry?' But he never minded me a pin's point, only stepped into the room another step or two, and roared out as if there was an evil sperrit in his stomach, '*Mr. Flynn!*'—'Och, then, sweet bad luck to your assurance,' says I; 'is it for this that yees made me lave my cane below stairs, for fear I'd make you know your distance, you set of spalpeens?' says I, looking about me to try was there any more of them at my heels. But the fellow was only laughing at me in his cheek, when out walked Mr. Baymish himself. 'Mr. Flynn, you're welcome, sir,' says he.—'Thank'ee, sir,' says I.—'I hope there's nothing the matter with you, sir?' says he.—'Nothing particklar, sir,' says I, 'barring the liberty that gintleman in the red breeches is taking wid my name.'—'Pooh, pooh, Mr. Flynn,' says he, 'we must only laugh at those trifles,' says he, taking me under the arm and gintly sheving me in before a whole lot of beautiful ladies, who sat tittering and laughing, and stuffing their little muslin aprons and redicules into their mouths the moment they put their eyes upon poor Paddy Flynn. 'Your sarvint, ginteels,' says I in rale quality form, *bowing down to the* ground. 'My dear,' says Mr. *Baymish to the* misthress, who stood up, God bless

her purty face! to meet us, 'this is Mr. Thomas Flynn's worthy father, and my very particular friend; allow me to introduce him to you, and to all of you, ladies and gentlemen,' says he, taking me by the hand and bowing with me. Well, d'ye see, they all rose like a congregation to get the priest's blessing after mass, and kept bowing at me till they nearly bothered me. So says I in return, 'God save all here, barring the cat,' not forgetting my manners. But the quality said nothing but nodded at me, which I thought was anything but ginteel or daycent. 'Well,' says I to myself, 'the poor crathers may be rich and proud, but good manners is another thing; and I don't think they are so much to be blamed, seeing that they never took lessons from Pat Flynn, taycher of dancing, good manners, and all other kinds of music.'

"Mr. Beamish at last made me sit down, and I thin began to admire at the beautiful picthurs, and the mighty big looking-glasses, and the varnished tables, that you could see your phiz-mahogany in, and the foreign tay-pots full of flowers, and the carpets that you 'd sink up to your hamstrings in, and oh, the darlings—the ladies! But the sorra sign of dinner myself saw, although I thought all as one as if the French and English were fighting in my bowels, *wid* the downright famishing hunger. 'Oh, Tom, *Tom, avich machree*,' says I, giving them a squeeze *for every* twist they gave myself, 'isn't this cruel

tratement intirely? I 'm suffering for your sake.' But there was no use in complaining, so I turned up my phiz-mahogany to look at the beautiful window-curtains, and there were two beautiful goolden sarpints over them peeping out at us, and ready to pounce down on us, when all of a sudden in pops my gintleman in the red breeches, and roars out to my great joy, 'Dinner 's on the table.' Thin it was that they took a start out of Paddy Flynn, for on looking about, the divil a sign of a wall was there but what was whipped away by enchantment, and there stood the dinner on the bran new table-cloth, as white and as beautiful as a corpse at a wake. All the ladies and gintlemen stood up, and of coorse so did myself. 'Mr. Flynn,' says Mr. Beamish.—'Sir?' says I.—'Will you take Mrs. Beamish's hand?' says he.—'For what, sir?' says I; 'what call have I to Mrs. Beamish's hand? It 's yourself that 's her husband has the best right to it, sir,' says I.—'Oh, do, Mr. Flynn, be good enough to take Mrs. Beamish's hand; we are only going to dinner, and it is merely to lead her to her chair,' says he.—'Indeed, faith, sir,' says I, 'if it wasn't to oblige your honour, it would be contrary to my religion to do the likes wid any man's wife while Betty 's alive and kicking.'—But they all fell a-laughing at me, while I took Mrs. Beamish's hand an' led her to her *sate. When everybody* had taken their places, Mr. *Beamish said to* me, 'Mr. Flynn, will you sit next

me?' says he.—'Thank'ee, sur,' says I, quite glad to be axed; for I was afeard of my life to sit among the young divils in the petticoats, that were all tittering and bursting their sides at me.—'Let me give you some soup,' says he.—'Broth, if you plase,' says I, winking at him.—'Well, no matter, Mr. Flynn,' says he, smiling at myself, and he helped me to two big spoonfuls of the tureen that was afore him. The first sup I tuck scalded my mouth until I thought my two eyes would leap out of my head; so I blew into the remainder, and thin made it lave that. Whin Mr. Beamish saw that my hollow plate was empty, 'Mrs. Beamish is looking at you, Mr. Flynn,' says he.—'For what, sir?' says I.—'She 's looking at you,' says he, laying his hand on a decanter.—'She 's welcome, sir,' says I; 'but, blur an' ouns, I hope I 'm all right,' looking at myself all over to see if my buttons were fast.—'Oh, she only wants you to pledge her. Tim,' says he, 'help the wine.'—'Thank you and her a thousand times, sir,' says I; but the stingy fellow in the red breeches only helped us each to a thimbleful.—'Blur and ouns,' says I to myself, 'the masther, I suppose, orders her to be helped, *as he likes her.*' So I was determined to watch my opportunity; and when I thought no one was looking, I nodded to the misthress, and pointed to a decanter that stood near her, and lifted my glass at the same time, which she understood, for the women always understand

you, and she smiled and nodded to me in return. But she was so much afeard of him, that the divil a toothful she put into it, in spite of all my nods and winks, and shrugging my showlders, and pointing to my full glass, that I could throw at her. 'Tundher and turf,' says I to myself, 'hasn't he her under great controwl?' and I thought of *somebody* who used to clap her wings and crow at home.—'What fish do you choose, Mr. Flynn?' says his honour.—'I never take none but on Fridays, and then bekaise I can't help it, sir,' says I.—'You 'll find that turbot delicious, sir,' says Mrs. Beamish.—'I prefer mate, ma'am,' says I.—'Well, look round the table, Mr. Flynn, and say what you will have,' says Mr. Beamish.—'Some of that pork, sir, fornent that gintleman in the specs,' says I.—'It 's ham, sir,' says ould Goggles, quite snappish.—'Ham 's pork, Mr. *F'ore*-sight,' says I; and the whole company roared out laughing; and, as I didn't like them to have all the laugh to themselves, I laughed louder and longer than any of them.—'You 're quite right,' says he, making the best of what he didn't bargain for, and sending me a plate full well bowlstered on cabbage; and, faith, I stuck into it like a hungry hawk.—'Mr. Flynn,' says his honour.—'Sir,' says I, laying down my knife and fork quite ginteelly on my plate, and looking him full in the *face*.—'*I hope* you are helped to your liking,' says *he*.—'*Mighty* well, I thank you;'—but the divil a

plate I had, for the thief in the red breeches had whipped it away while I was talking to his masther.—'Oh, murther, murther,' says I to myself, 'isn't this purty thratement I am suffering, and all for your sake, Tom, avich!' But before I could say another word, the ugly black-faced fellow popped down afore me a dish of chopped nettles; so, seeing I could do no better, I began bowlting them, when he runs back and whipped it again from afore me, and said, 'The missus wants some spinnich,' says he.—'Oh, Tom, Tom,' says I again, 'isn't this too bad?' Well, they gave me something else, which was so hot with red pepper that I couldn't eat three bits of it, and afther that a bit of sweet starch, so that I was as hungry as whin I sat down. It would vex a saint out of heaven all the while to see the fellows in the red breeches whipping and snapping everything, while my guts were pinching me with hunger and vexation. 'Oh, ye blackguards!' says I in my teeth, 'you murdering villains, if I had ye at home under my tobacky press, wouldn't I make you remember Paddy Flynn!' But there was no use in talking, for up they came as impudent as ever, and put before every lady and gintleman, including myself, a glass bowl of cowld water. Not knowing what the divil to do with such cowld comfort, I was looking about for the first move, when Mr. Beamish said to me, 'Mr. Flynn,' says he, 'make use of that wate

we 'll have the claret immediately.'—'Yes, sir,' says I, thinking of Tom; so I took up the bowl betwane my two hands, and threw myself back in the chair with my mouth wide open, and gulped the water down in one big swallow, till I thought there was two feet of it in my stomach, and I felt myself as full as the tick of a bed, although there was not the bigness of an egg in my body afore. But oh—och mavourneen! the cold wather began to give me such an—oh—oh—och!—it almost gives me the colic now to think of it—such a rumbling, an' grumbling, an' tumbling, an' shivering, an' quaking, an' shaking, that heartily as Mr. Beamish an' the ladies laughed at me, the divil a wrinkle was on my face or my stomach in two minutes. 'Nahana-mandhoul,' says I to the masther in a pig's whisper, 'I 'm fairly flummaxed and done over.'—'Oh, I hope you 're not unwell, Mr. Flynn,' says Mrs. Beamish, wid the soft sweet voice of an angel.—'O no, avourneen machree,' says I, 'but something mighty quare 's the matter wid me. Mr. Beamish, jewel, I 'm in a morthal hurry intirely; you must excuse me; for *I can't* stay. Oh, Tom, Tom,' says I, 'what cruel usage I 'm suffering for your sake!'—'Mr. Flynn,' says his honour, whispering something behind his hand to me—'O no, avourneen,' says I, slinking out of the room, and squeezing my bowels *as if I* hadn't a moment to live. I don't *know how I got* down the stairs, but when I did, a

fellow at the foot says to me, 'Your hat, sir,' giving it a nate touch wid his sleeve.—'Thank you for my own,' says I, taking it from him.—'Hope you won't forget me, sir; always get a tinpenny or two,' says the spalpeen.—"Oh, murther,' says I, drawing forth a tinpenny piece like a tooth from my breeches-pocket, 'what I suffer for your sake, Tom, honey!' —'Your gloves, sir,' says another gintleman, 'nicely aired; hope you won't forget me, sir.'—'Oh, Tom, Tom!' says I, pulling out another tinpenny.—'Your cane, sir,' says *Snowball*, who robbed me of the dish of spinnich; 'took great care of it; hope you won't forget me, sir.'—'Indeed and I won't,' says I, laying it across his showlders an' his shins, until I astonished his wake intellect so much that he screeched with the pain; 'forget ye, indeed, faith! I'll never forget ye, ye set of thieving, whipping, snapping villains! Let me out!' says I, roaring out like a lion, for I felt my stick in my fist;—so they bowed and scraped, and kept their distance till I got into the street. So as soon as I heard them shut the door, I said to myself, 'The divil burn you, Paddy Flynn,' says I, 'if ever you give two tinpennies again for a mouthful of chopped nettles an' a bellyful of cowld wather.'"

THE PHANTOM FUNERAL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE SUBALTERN."

AT the distance of several miles from the scene which in a former legend we described, there is a winding passage through the hills, which leads to a very narrow and precipitous defile, called Glenshee, or Glensheich,—that is to say, the Valley of Spirits. The glen itself is formed by the bases of the mountains, which fall, many of them, in a sharp declivity, for several hundred feet, and is in its gorge filled with the waters of a small dark lake, over which no ray of sunshine has ever been known to shed a character of gladness. Along its farther margin there occur here and there nooks or corners of table-land. Narrow they are, and always of a grotesque formation; for the hills are peculiarly wild and sterile in their character, inasmuch as a shelving mass of *débris* is the only surface which many of them present, while others are composed entirely of broken and rugged rocks. Yet, although narrow, there was a time when one, and not the *broadest, of these* table-lands sustained a hearth *round which a* poor but honest family were wont to

assemble. The hut which contained that hearth was, indeed, of the very humblest order. It lay beneath the shelter of the precipice; and save that its wicker chimney emitted at all seasons a delicate wreath of smoke, something more than a careless glance would have been required to convince you that such a thing was there. Moreover, round it, or near at hand, were such traces of man's industry as such a spot might alone be expected to exhibit. A patch of green was beside the cabin door, which, from the strong contrast it presented to the brown and stunted herbage near, you were at no loss to determine must be a potato field. A couple of goats, too, were tethered beside the threshold; while a few fowls, less than half domesticated, scraped a scanty subsistence for themselves from among the roots of the heather. But in other respects sign there was none that in this melancholy defile man had set up his rest; for the very roof of the cottage waved with long rank grass, and the bluebell and wild thyme were abundantly intermixed with it.

Wild as Glenshee is, however, and desolate, and lonely, there are not wanting features here and there which effectually redeem it from the hazard of being condemned as utterly repulsive. A clear mountain stream comes tumbling down the hill, making the ear glad with its everlasting music, and falls into the lake, not till it has threaded its way

for a long space amid overhanging rows of mountain ash and the delicate alder. Over its banks, too, the sward grows rich and sweet, as if the soil were fertilised by the course of the torrent; while here and there the intervention of a rock gathers the waters into a heap, that they may spring off again in a tiny cataract of most pellucid beauty. But this is not all. The rivulet in question flows *westward*—a circumstance not to be overlooked, as connected with the burden of our history; for streams which take this course have a virtue peculiarly their own. When the shadows of the trees fall on them, or of the rocks, or even of the clouds above, they become scrolls in which the favoured among men "may read strange matters;" and many a time and oft has this particular rivulet shown to the eyes which studied them events that were to come.

A good many years ago, the hut of which I have spoken was inhabited by old Robin Ure, the shepherd of Glenshee, a thoughtful and somewhat contemplative man, who had arrived at one of the latter stages of human existence, through some enjoyment, and a good deal of suffering. Robin was one of those philosophers of nature's forming, who feel that perfect happiness is not to be expected upon earth, and who therefore school themselves to bear with patience, to look back with resignation, *and forward in* hope. Robin was also a religious *man in his* own peculiar way; for, though he

seldom went to church (from which, indeed, his occupation cut him off), he carried his Bible with him to the hill-side, and read it gratefully. And much need there was that Robin should find both there, and in the world of imagination which his native poetry created, some solace for the trials which the world of busy men brought him. He had a kind, cheerful, and industrious partner, to be sure, who used her best endeavours to render his home happy; but woe is me! even the tenderness of a wife will not always suffice if it come alone. Out of the seven children, all of them daughters, whom God had given them, one only survived; and she, albeit the very apple of their eyes, was to her parents a source of unremitting anxiety. She was a fragile and a delicate thing, tender and sensitive in her frame, which was but little adapted to struggle against the rude blasts of her native glen, and the privations to which at times she was subjected. Indeed, Mary—or, as the wild and poetic dialect of the glen has it, Mari—was a living instance of the caprice of nature, which plants flowers in a glacier, and scatters rills through a desert waste. Yet hers was not a mere physical debility,—that is to say, the feebleness of the frame had a deeper source than ordinary disease.

The order of her destiny had entailed upon Mari a supernatural gift, which sapped the foundations of her life, and stripped her of every source of interest and employment belonging to her sex and to

nature. She was born to the inheritance of the second-sight,—that strange and most mysterious faculty which may be traced nowhere except in the Highlands of Scotland; and the consequence was, that from her very cradle she had been an object of awe, I had almost said of terror, even to those who loved her with the tenderest affection. Accordingly the poor child grew almost to woman's estate without having even an ordinary acquaintance with any beyond her own narrow family circle; and, as Robin and his wife could not fail to fall in some degree under the shadow of their unhappy child's proscription, a stranger within the narrow vale of Glenshee—unless, indeed, it might be Murdoch, the shepherd of the opposite mountain, who sometimes came with a bonnet full of blackberries, or a lamb's skin for Mari's winter bed quilt—would have been almost as much an object of curiosity as Gulliver in Brobdignag, or the first ship to the South Sea Islanders. Yet, as matters stood within, the household of Glenshee was by no means an unhappy one, when the spirit of the lonely maiden rested from the trouble of its waters; for in the long nights of winter, when the wooden boards were drawn snugly over the window, and the logs of dried fir glowed and crackled on the hearth, the good wife turned her wheel cheerily, and Mari rested her chin upon her father's knee, and *turned up to him the* lustrous eyes which seemed to *form quite the* largest half of the pale face they

lighted, to listen to the wonders of wild poesy which he drew from a Gaelic volume of Ossian—the commonest study of such among the Highlanders as study at all. When summer came again the wizard maiden loved well to carry to the mountain's brow afar off the broth or sowens which formed her father's simple meal, and to linger upon some bare peak which overhung the lake, till the sun went down in his glory, and the stars came forth in their gentleness. For it is one of the peculiarities of this strange malady, if malady it may be called, that the fit of inspiration neither comes when the seer may desire its coming, nor admits of control or repression. There is, and there has been, divination everywhere. The Pythoness of old, the astrologer of the middle ages, the fortune-teller of our own times, all have, or pretend to have, intercourse with unseen powers, which they control; but the second-sight is peculiar to the Scottish Highlanders, and a heavy burden it is upon those individuals on whom destiny may lay it.

Mari was standing on the threshold of her fifteenth year when my tale commences, though her weak frame and stinted proportions did not seem to claim, by several years, a period of life so far advanced towards maturity. If the healthful breeze of the mountains had blown upon her cheek with the invigorating influence which so often attends upon it, she would probably have been a beautiful specimen of her peculiar style of peasant loveliness; for

her features were regular and, open, and, in the period of health which she occasionally enjoyed, wore an expression of touching sweetness which spoke to the heart. She had a beseeching light in her deep grey eyes, which gave you an impression that there was some fervent and unuttered desire within which this world could not grant; and the melancholy languor of the other features, and the frequency with which her face was turned towards heaven, suggested the idea that her longing was to be at rest.

One clear, blue, biting evening at the end of October, that beautiful Scottish season when the varied covering of tree and mountain is yet stationary under the bright frosty atmosphere of winter, Murdoch, the shepherd, took his way up the margin of Lochshee, with his plaid drawn round him, and his bonnet pulled over his eyes, in testimony of the sharpness of the air. The breeze came keenly over the mountain-tops, and swept the atmosphere of every trace of cloud or haze, but without rippling the surface of the water, which lay, as usual, dark, clear, and motionless, as if under the spell of some viewless influence. The leaves of the mountain ash were falling with that sad sighing motion, which seems to say that they are grieving to resign their bright and brief existence; but the hardier wych elms yet retained their dark green foliage, and, though rare and straggling, they connected the bright blue sky and the delicate tint of the sunset with

the departing season to which they seemed to be long.

Murdoch took less heed of the beauty of the evening than we have done, for he was pushing briskly forward, and appeared to view with some complacency the unusual breadth of the column of smoke which rose from the cottage chimney, as if betokening the additional warmth of the blaze within. The shepherd had rounded the last turn of the rocky footpath, which led him by a long sweep from the opposite margin of the lake, and had put his foot upon the nearest of the stepping-stones which were to take him dry-shod over the broad part of the stream, as it flowed over the level ground, when his eye caught the flutter of a plaid, and he looked hastily up the river to discover the owner of it, not doubting that Elspeth's hour of milking had arrived, and that she had wrapped herself up to follow its duties out of doors. The plaid, however, as his quick eye soon perceived, was suspended from a tree, and its folds prevented him from tracing any figure to whom it might belong, or which might have sheltered behind it. The thought glanced across him that Mari might have retreated to her favourite haunt, and he pushed his way through the brechans, with the intention of winning her home out of the chill autumn air to her mother's warm hearth; but when he drew aside the plaid, which hung like a screen from some hazels, he became like

one transfixed at the vision which met him. The poor child stood like one spell-stricken close by the verge of the streamlet, with her small fleshless feet touching the water, her hands pressed convulsively over her breast, and her eyes fixed with a wild and rigid stare upon the surface of the stream, while the masses of long black hair, which waved by the action of the wind back from her unearthly and colourless features, gave her, even in the eyes that were familiar with her wildest moods, an expression of frenzied excitement.

Murdoch hesitated for a moment, in doubt whether or not he could with safety arrest the young Pythoness in her mood of inspiration; but apprehension for the afflicted creature's bodily health prevailed, and he advanced slowly, yet with a warning noise, to her side, and said softly,—

"The burn side is ower chilly for you, Mari dear; come with me to your mother's fire. See how the chimney smokes; I warrant it is cozier by the nook this bitter even than standing there without plaid or brogues upon you. Come your ways, Mari."

And he advanced nearer and nearer, with always a deeper tone of entreaty. The maiden stretched out her hand without looking towards him, and drew her friendly visitant closer to the water's edge.

"Look you there, and see what your morning *work will be.* You are come to ask Robin Ure to *hunt the fox on* Craig Caillach—ay, ay; but Heaven

sends me the power to keep him. And I would keep you too; for you are one half o' my treasure of dust. There!—there!—Will you do as I have warned you, or will you dree the weird that mun surely come?"

Murdoch looked eagerly into the water, but his gaze discovered nothing except a dark spot upon its surface, caused by the shadow from one of the sharp cliffs as it deepened in the increasing twilight.

"Well, well, Mari dear," answered he at last, "there is nothing but the figure of the craig—there is surely nothing to frighten you in a rock near which you have lived all your life. And if I do wile your father to the fox-hunt the morn, he kens all the wild places in the corri ower well to make it a dangerous chase to him."

Mari made a movement of impatience, and exclaimed hastily, and, as it seemed, angrily,—

"Ah! dull dark eyeballs—clogged with worldly wisdom — see you not that withered cluster of beechen leaves that floats upon the burn?—there is blood in its track, and it has lodged in the shadow of the Devil's Dyke. See!—see!—it shivers and trembles, and the water gurgles under it. Blood—blood and brains!—God be with us, Murdoch!—one of ye will find his last chase on yon craig to-morrow. Come—come!"

The unfortunate young prophetess, overcome by the terrible frenzy of her vision, staggered back

wards, and fell into the arms of the terrified and compassionate shepherd.

Murdoch's blood ran cold at the mysterious language of the excited creature before him. That he had sought the cottage of Glenshee for the express purpose of persuading Robert to join in the sport to which she had alluded was true; but it was equally certain that no living thing had as yet been apprised of that intention, and the information of Mari must have been conveyed by a channel such as Murdoch was far too genuine a Highlander to contemplate without a shudder. He carried his unconscious burden to her home, and committed her to the mournful and anxious attendance of Elspeth, who found a ready solution to the riddle of Murdoch's scared and solemn looks in the situation of the poor little sufferer, whom he loved, as she well knew, like a sister, and whom he had but seldom before seen in the paroxysms of her disease. Robin was from home far over the mountain, and, although the good wife was in hourly expectation of his return, yet Murdoch was not to be prevailed upon to wait for him, but avowed his intention of returning straight to his home, as the business which brought him to the glen was not of so pressing a nature as to demand his longer sojourn. He satisfied himself, accordingly, that the hour of Robin's return from a toilsome trudge over the hill would place his acci-

dental attendance on the fox-chase out of the ques-

tion; and having so secured the safety of the old man from the perils which threatened him, he availed himself of the good wife's proffered repast of cheese and bannocks, and once more retraced his steps down the side of the lake, forbearing, from motives which may be traced to the sensitiveness of the superstitious, to lighten the load that weighed him down with its mystery by imparting any portion of it to the maternal heart of Elspeth.

A fox-chase over the giant hills, cliffs, and craigs of the Highlands is, no doubt, a species of amusement that may prove somewhat startling to the ear of a southern sportsman; but when the hunt is described as performed on foot, and for the sole purpose of exterminating the creature, which the sheep farmer finds so inimical to the interests of his fold, the practicability of the exploit may be admitted, though the perils attending it continue as before; for they who have had an opportunity of seeing the stout and fearless agility with which the young Highlander springs from crag to crag after his prey, or follows the hounds down the shelving sides of scaur and corri, will confess that the chamois is won through scarcely superior hazard. Accordingly, Mari's prediction of danger to the hunters on that rugged and most dangerous promontory of the mountain called the Devil's Dyke was by no means chimerical, as Murdoch, with all his strength of limb and nerve, acknowledged; and he waited in considerable anxiety the reports of the

chase throughout the early part of the morning that followed its occurrence. It was not long that his suspense continued; for before noontide a gilly from the other side of the hill came over to tell him that Angus Bane had slid from the uppermost pinnacle of the craig, and dashed his head to atoms among the rocks at the foot of the corri called the Devil's Stair, and to bid Murdoch come over to his funeral on the day following.

A thoughtful and an awe-stricken man was Murdoch that evening, as he once more took his solitary way over the path that led him to Glenshee. His blood curdled in his veins as he considered the verification of Mari's prophecy, with the natural timidity which, even among the most steady believers in the supernatural, fails not to assail them on any immediate experience of its effects. He longed to be himself the first to communicate to the girl the fulfilment of her wild prediction, partly because he wished to judge of her faith in her own powers by her manner of receiving it, and partly because he was apprehensive of evil consequences, should she hear of the accident from a less heedful informant. His heart beat quickly as he passed the scene of his last night's adventure, and he asked himself if it were possible that a frame so feeble could struggle long with such fierce emotions as he had witnessed there; and, as the question arose, he involuntarily quickened his *pace, as if in* anxiety to learn the well-being of the

unfortunate Mari. The shadows had deepened as he sped along, and before Murdoch had crossed the burn its surface was dimmed by the descending night; but a bright spark glowed from the cottage window, and the wayfarer strode forward enlivened, and almost reassured, by the picture his fancy presented of the snug group, and the warm welcome which awaited him. His visions, however, were interrupted; for before he crossed the threshold he saw the door open, and a figure closely muffled, which he, nevertheless, recognised to be Mari, stepped out into the darkness. He drew aside for an instant to watch her motions, half afraid to cross the young prophetess for the second time by his presence, and yet determined, if possible, to prevent so dismal a triumph of her disease as that to which he had been witness on the previous night. He was concealed under the hazel bushes as she passed, but her garments touched him, and from within the folds of her plaid he heard a loud sob and a plaining sound, that convinced him she was weeping bitterly, and there was something in the natural and familiar evidence of such suffering which transformed the afflicted being before him from an object of dread and horror to one of sympathy and compassion.

"Is it you, Mari dear?" said he in a gentle voice, and walking up to her from behind. "What's takin' you out at this time o' night, an' the sky sae dark, an' the wind sae snell as it is e'en now?

Surely the beasts are a' closed in by this time; an' your mother could ha'e nae bit errand to tak' ye doon the loch side after gloaming. Come your ways hame again, dearie, and leave that silly moon to look frae behind the clouds at her ain white face in the water, an' ye shall see her some other night, when there is nae wind to drive the black curtain ower, an' to cut ye through as this does."

The girl turned round to him at once, and answered in a plaintive and sorrowful tone as she withdrew the screen from her face.

"Is it you, Murdoch? I am thankful to God for sending you to me. I would have had a cold walk over Ben Shee if you had not come."

"Ben Shee!" repeated the shepherd. "Was it over Ben Shee that ye were bound, Mari, and in search o' me? What can I do for you? Tell me that. I 'se do it, whatever it may be," and he drew her towards him, and wrapped the sheltering plaid closer round her shivering frame, while she continued to weep piteously, and clung to his strong arm, as if in entreaty.

"Promise me one thing, Murdoch of Ben Shee—promise me," said she in á paroxysm of anxiety—"promise, as ye would on a dying bed, one thing that I shall ask you; for, if you refuse, it will bring me to the grave. Old Robin Ure, my father, the *kindest of fathers*, and the wisest and the best, he *that would not break* one of the least of the com-

mands of God, nor teach others to disregard them, has refused me, and the sin shall be upon his head, and the suffering upon mine. Promise me that you will be less headstrong, Murdoch, and that you will add your words to mine, that we may move the old man from his purpose; promise that you will not attend the funeral of Angus Bane."

Murdoch gave the excited creature the promise she desired, and then stood silent for a few moments, surprised and bewildered.

"Oh, Murdoch! Murdoch!" said Mari in a voice of utter despair, "what shall we do to keep my father at home? Remember my words last night, and then ask if any childish whim is on my spirit now. You, Murdoch, you can testify to the truth of mine observance. You can say whether phantasies struggle with truth within my brain till it be crazed. Oh, Murdoch! Murdoch! tell you the old man, that if he go to the burial, he will never return. Tell him that he will leave his child an orphan, and his wife a widow, and that his own old bones shall whiten where never a voice will wail his coronach, nor kindly hand be nigh to close his eyelids, or to streak his corpse; that no lyke wake will be held over him, nor grass grow green upon his heart. Oh, Murdoch! Murdoch! is it not an awful thing to die unblessed, and by our own wilful agency? to sleep with unhallowed things, and to leave those we love best without a prayer for them or ourselves?"

The poor girl stopped her gasping address, and her whole form seemed to heave with agitation. Murdoch soothed her for a while with promises of his uttermost endeavours to move the resolution of her father, and she grew calmer under the hopes of success with which he strove to reassure her.

"An' what for should we no follow poor old Angus to his lang hame, Mari?" asked he at last. "Angus was one of your father's oldest friends on all Ben Shee; an' he must hae a gude reason for 't before he agree to stay at hame, an' let others mourn for him. Tell me, Mari dear, what ye are afraid for."

Mari flung the plaid far back from her face and head, and turned her forehead up to the white moonshine, till Murdoch could see that the beam itself was not more wan and deathlike. Her features were all at work with the spell of her malady; she waved her arms for him to follow, and then flitted past him to a small ridge, or knoll, on the margin of her favourite stream. When she had gained the summit, she stood with her back towards the waters, her face turned fully up to the sky, and her arms stretched out over the valley at her feet, the impersonation of an inspired priestess.

"See, see, they are coming," said she in an eager and concentrated tone, and with her eyes fastened upon some object in the valley, which Murdoch fancied the dim night alone prevented him from tracing: "*they* are coming slowly—slowly—a bonny

burial, an' six mourners at the bier: they are coming o'er the moor o' Chrom Dhu, and their black shadows are following them like spirits. Stand aside, Murdoch; they will pass even now, and we may count the bearers, and see if Robin Ure be among them."

Murdoch stared wistfully at the spell-bound creature before him, and, as he scanned the deathly features and gleaming eyes, his heart swelled with a compassionate longing to arrest, even in its progress, the destroying influence that was upon her. He felt that it could be no visible shadow on which her gaze was fixed with such a fearful intensity, for the moor of Chrom Dhu was far away over the other side of the mountain. He took both her cold hands, and, chafing them gently with his own, spoke kindly to her in words of comfort and remonstrance.

"Yon 's no Chrom Dhu, Mari dear; it 's your ain bonnie Glenshee, an' there 's nae living shadows moving on it; it is but the waving of your ain black firs you are looking at, and the clouds that are scudding so mirkily ower the moor. Let us go, Mari: ye will catch your very death in this dreary night."

"Trees and clouds!" said the maiden with a terrible laugh: "do they bury each other, and walk in such goodly ranks as these do? Kneel down, poor clay, and you shall see."

Murdoch almost unconsciously obeyed her, and she stood hanging over him, so as to bring their figures into the closest possible contact, then

placing one hand upon her side, she made him look through the angle formed by her elbow, and speak not till his gaze was done. The prohibition was unnecessary. Murdoch drew his breath between his closed teeth, the blood stood still in his veins, his flesh moved, and his brain sickened with horror.

A funeral procession, in solemn and regular array, moved steadily along within a few paces of the spot where he stood. The pall, the bier, the coffin, and the mourning habiliments, all were as distinct and palpable as the commonest occurrences of life, and they gradually approached nearer and nearer with their slow and measured movement, and their noiseless tread, till the gazer felt his eye-strings crack as he measured the diminishing distance. On they came—dark, dismal, and solemn—nearer, nearer, and nearer,—on they came with a tread which was the more horrible because it gave back no sound. Murdoch felt the atmosphere of a crowd; felt their garments stir the air as they passed him; felt the burial pall flap beside his very cheek, and his soul shuddered with horror. The faces of friends and kinsmen were among that company of wraiths, and Murdoch felt the arm of Mari grasp his neck with a convulsive clutch as the last stragglers passed the spot. Another and another lingered; one more,—it was Robin Ure. A white mist fell upon the vision of *Murdoch*, and, with a scream of agony, he *fell senseless upon the* heather.

When Murdoch awoke from his trance he was alone. Mari had disappeared, the sky was pure and cloudless, and the full moon shed light and gladness over the valley. The shepherd arose, with a heavy sickness at his heart, and a bewilderment in his brain, that rendered his memory dim. He was gradually conscious of some deadly peril that hung over his old and valued friend—a peril which he had promised all his efforts to avert, and which rendered his presence in the cottage an immediate necessity.

The next moment he had turned his back upon the shealing, and was wending his way with enfeebled steps towards his home. "I have seen the future," was his reflection, "and is mine a hand to change the decrees of Providence?" Human companionship at that moment would have shaken again the scarcely-established intellect, and he walked homeward. Sleep was not destined to visit the eyes of Murdoch during that, nor many succeeding nights of his existence, and the whole of the next day he walked about like one in a dream, with the horrible spell of his memory clinging to him like a fiend, and making the very sunshine black with its presence.

A dreadful mystery was before him: he knew not what evil it portended; but to look upon the similitude of the living, he well knew, was to number them shortly with the dead, and he felt, as it were, instinctively that he had seen Robin for the last

time. A feverish desire was upon him to make one in that company of wraiths; and, despite his solemn vow to Mari, the temptation rose strong and vivid to follow in the train of Angus's funeral, and witness, even at the cost of participating in, the danger that threatened it.

The burial would take place at early morning; and, as the churchyard lay far away, it was necessary that he should set out overnight, that he might join the procession in its march. He was resolved to go. The clouds of the previous night had fulfilled their omen, for a heavy fall of snow continued throughout the day, and, by the hour of starting, had rendered the mountain-path neither pleasant nor safe to traverse; but Murdoch was determined to share the peril of which he alone had received the warning, and by midnight he was prepared to start. The storm still raged, and the wind drifted the snow about in wreaths, till the density of the atmosphere became appalling; yet the spell-stricken shepherd did not waver in his purpose. He folded his plaid about him, and quenched his solitary fire, and was about to extinguish the lamp before he went forth, when a low knocking at the door, and a feeble and continued moan, sent the blood to his heart, and the tremor to his limbs, which a less mysterious incident might have lent them in the present fever of his imagination.

After a few moments of hesitation, however, the

knocking was repeated, and Murdoch advanced to the door, wondering if any human applicant could indeed seek shelter on such a night. The gust blew out the lamp as he slowly undid the fastening of the door, and looked abroad upon the tempest. A dim object lay half across the threshold, and he moved it with his hand before he could be convinced that thence issued the piteous moaning which met his ear. A very slight exertion was sufficient to place the creature—by whatever denomination it went—upon its feet, and Murdoch turned it to the half-open door, that the vague light of the sky might give him the means, which the darkened cottage withheld, of identifying it.

"God pity you, poor shorn lamb! is it you?" exclaimed the stout Highlander in a faltering voice, as the wasted lineaments of Mari became visible from the folds of the plaid; "is it you, or is 't your wraith that has breasted the wind and the storm for nae purpose but to scare the little sense that ye left me clean awa'?"

"Murdoch! Murdoch!" answered the poor maiden in a spent and feeble tone, that sounded itself like the wail of the tempest, "come your ways; it was indeed the spirit that brought this wretched body over the mountain in life. Blessings on you, Murdoch, for expecting me; the plaid and the brogues *will* not be to seek. Come quickly, Murdoch. My *strength* failed me, or I should have been earlier.

Come—come! they are near the Chrom by this time;" and she pulled the corner of his plaid, and turned once more towards the door.

"An' where is it ye would lead me now, Mari?" said the shepherd. "Ye are no able for a longer walk the night. Sit down, an' rest ye, Mari dear, and take off that snowy plaid, and I'll kindle up the logs again; and here's new milk in the corner, that I brought in, little thinking *ye* would need it, and you'll soon be warm and strong again; and by morning dawn we'll set off to Glenshee. Your poor mother will be half crazed when she misses you." And he strove earnestly to lead her mind from the subject of her continued ramble, but it was all in vain; she stamped her foot upon the ground impatiently.

"Warmed and fed," said she indignantly, "when I might be looking my last upon those who will never be warmed or fed again! Man! I tell you to come with me, if you would not rue it to the last moment of your life;" and she turned from him again with a gesture of command.

"Whither, then, Mari," said the shepherd submissively, "whither am I to follow you? You cannot reach Chrom Dhu, were you as strong as I am, before morning, unless you climb the south shoulder of the Devil's Dyke: and, when ye are even on the top o' the crag, it takes a stronger limb and a firmer foot than yours to make its way down *the other side.*"

"There is no need, Murdoch," answered the unfortunate in her former tone of helplessness. "We can but look upon the work of doom were we beside it,—that may as well be done from the crag itself."

The storm was somewhat abated when they set forth, and, though the snow still fell heavily, there was no impenetrable mist of moving wreaths to make their progress one of danger as well as of difficulty. Murdoch was hurried along by his frail conductress with an activity that seemed the effect of some supernatural gift. She made her way through the drifted snow with a speed which taxed even his own powers, and glided up the toilsome ascent which led to the Devil's Dyke so quickly and easily, that Murdoch felt his blood chill with the remembrance that she was not gifted like himself. At length the summit of the crag was gained, and Mari stood fearlessly on its ridge, and looked over into the wild hollow of Chrom Dhu.

The Chrom was a lonely moor, or rather a peat-hagg, leafless and trackless, that yawned in one long stripe of savage sterility at the foot of the precipice. In the middle of the waste lay a small sheet of moss-water, unfathomably deep, but generally discernible from all points, stagnant and motionless as it was, from the pitchy colour of its surface, which was esteemed a sufficient warrant for the safety of the cattle, that might otherwise have been tempted to its margin. The wild singularity of the Chrom was this night completely veiled by the pure cover

ing of snow that lay deep and spotless upon its bosom. Even the black pool had been previously frozen up, and retained, in consequence, its share of the universal shroud. The dull white light of the sky, and the uniformity of the earth, made every object, even at the foot of the crag, distinctly visible; and Murdoch stood motionless, gazing downwards, expecting each moment that he numbered to see the funeral procession of Angus Bane enter the Chrom on its progress to the churchyard.

The snow had ceased, and the dawn was far advanced, leaving the whole sweep of the valley at their command; and before Murdoch had recovered breath from the steep ascent of the crag, the foremost of the train of mourners appeared in view. They came in one large group, closely gathered about the bier, and followed by one or two straggling lingerers, exactly as Murdoch remembered their arrangement in his vision of the night. On they went—their black figures clearly traced upon the white ground, and each one casting a long shadow, that loomed far over the earth, with a strange and frightful appearance in the solitude. On they came; and Mari's breath came in suffocating gasps, and she tossed her arms wildly to the sky. Murdoch watched them with an eagerness that bound every sense into one long gaze. On they came, slowly, steadily—on and on, till they had reached the middle of the moor. *Murdoch's heart* quailed and sickened within him, and *Mari laughed* in her agony with a cry of madness.

"God be merciful! The pool! the pool!" shouted Murdoch, till his broad chest heaved and strained with the effort.

It was in vain: the doomed train had missed their way on that trackless desert, and were all in the centre of the lake before the treacherous ice gave way. It was the work of an instant. One crackling sound reached even to the ears of the watchers —one fell plunge, and the bier and the mourners, the dead and the doomed, were engulfed for ever. Murdoch caught Mari in his arms, as in her frenzy she would have leaped from the crag at the moment of their immersion, and, flinging her over his shoulder like a three years' child, he took his sorrowful way to the desolate cottage of Glenshee.

The afflicted creature moaned and sobbed for a while in his arms, as if the fury of her paroxysm were subsiding, and as each gasp came feebler and feebler, Murdoch pleased himself with the thought that her terrible exertions were repaid by sleep. At last the sounds of her mourning ceased entirely; her head hung heavier and heavier on his neck, and Murdoch reached the shealing like one who walks in a dream. Mari was dead; and Murdoch gave to poor old Elspeth the body of her child, and the news of her widowhood, at the same moment.

Murdoch's experience of second sight was not fatal. He is still alive, and

"A better and a wiser man
He rose the morrow morn."

THE DUEL.

I WAS educated, said a French gentleman whom I met in quarantine, at Poitiers, though Lusignan is my native town.

Poitiers is well known to the antiquary as having possessed a Roman amphitheatre, of which, however, when I was at that university, only a vault, supposed to have been a cage for the wild beasts, remained. This cage, from the solidity of the masonry, and the enormous size of the blocks, seemed indestructible, but was not so; for when I last visited Poitiers, and asked for the key of the cavern, I found that it no longer existed, and that on the site had been constructed the inn "of the Trois Pelerins."

It is a stone's throw from the Salle d'Armes, a place with which I had been better acquainted than with the schools. To revive my ancient recollection, I entered the *salle*, and found there an inhabitant of the town whom I had known at college. He proposed that we should dine together at the "Trois Pelerins;" and, after drinking as good a bottle of wine as it afforded, he related to me what a few days before, in the very room where we were sitting, had happened at a dinner of the collegians. It was ordered for twelve; but one of the party having *invited a friend*, the number swelled to thirteen.

It is said that superstition supplies the place of

religion. I have observed this to be the case with the most sceptical of my acquaintance; and thus this number thirteen occasioned some remarks, and the stranger was looked upon with no very favourable eye, and considered as a supernumerary, who brought with him ill luck.

One of the set at last summoned resolution enough to say,

"I do not dine thirteen."

"Nor I," said another.

"Nor I," was repeated on all sides.

The guest, naturally embarrassed at this rudeness, got up, and was about to retire, when Alfonse, to whom he came as an *umbra*, proposed an ingenious expedient for doing away with the evil augury, and said,

"There is one way of annulling the proverb that threatens death in the course of the year to one of a party of thirteen; that way is to decide which of us shall fight a duel this evening or to-morrow morning."

"Done!" cried all the students at a breath.

"Shall it be among ourselves?" said one of them.

"No," replied the author of the proposition; "for then two of us would have to fight, whereas it ought to be the thirteenth."

"Right," said all the young men.

"Then let it be with one of the officers of the garrison."

"Be it so," said Alfonse; "we will make a pool, as usual, at the *café*, all thirteen of us; and——"

"The first out," said the student.

"No," interrupted Alfonse, "that would be a bad omen; it shall be the winner."

"Agreed!" replied all, and they sat down to table with as much gaity and *insouciance* as if nothing had been said.

The stranger, just as the soup was being put on the table, got up, and with a magisterial tone of voice addressed the assembly. "Gentlemen," said he, "I feel suddenly inspired with a sublime idea. We are about to eat and drink in the ruins of Roman greatness (alluding to the amphitheatre). Let us imitate that people in everything that is great. Nothing could be more splendid than the games of the gladiators which were celebrated over the tombs of the mighty dead,—nothing more sumptuous than the festivals held at their funerals. This is probably also a funereal fête; with this difference, that it is held before, and not after death. Let Poitiers, therefore, rival Rome in her magnificence; let this *cena* be in honour of the mighty remains over which we are sitting; let it be *morituro*,—sacred to him who is about to perish."

"Bravo!" exclaimed the guests one and all; "a splendid idea, by Jove!—a splendid *cena* be it!"

"Open the windows!" cried Alfonse. The windows were opened. As soon as the soup was served, smash went all the plates into the yard, and

shivered against the pavement. So, during the rest of dinner, every plate as fast as it was cleared, every bottle as soon as emptied, followed their fellows. One might perceive, by the practised dexterity of this feat, that it was not the first time they had played the same game.

During the first course nothing particular occurred to disturb their harmony; but it so happened that the *rôti*, which is, as you know, in France always served last, was burnt. Then there arose a general burst of indignation.

"Send the cook!" exclaimed they all to the waiters.

"Order up the cook! Here, cook! cook!" was the universal cry.

But the *chef* was not forthcoming.

Alfonse, the president, then said, "Must I go myself and fetch him?"

This menace had its effect: the *pauvre chef*, pale as death, and all cotton cap in hand, crawled into the room. He was greeted with deafening shouts.

"Come here!" said Alfonse. "Do you take us for the officers? What do you mean by serving us in this manner—eh?"

The man of the spit stammered out an apology. Alfonse looked at him askance.

"If I served you right," said he, "I should make *you eat* this detestable rôti of yours; but, as it is *the first* time of happening, my chastisement shall *be a paternal one.* Hold out your cotton cap."

The *chef* obeyed, and Alfonse turned out of a dish into it an enormous clouted cream (*omelet soufflé*), and said,

"Come, now, on with the cap, and see you don't first spill a drop."

He was forced to comply; and the unhappy Ude (*udus*), his face and white jacket streaming with the contents of the *plat*, was followed out of the room with hisses and bursts of laughter.

Thus went on the dinner, and with it a concert of broken plates, dishes, glasses, and bottles, accompanied by noises of all sorts, which rose to *fortissimo* as the wine, of which they drank to excess, got into their heads.

The dessert, which succeeded the second course, was ended by what they called a salad. This salad was thus mixed. They turned up the four corners of the table-cloth, and rolled therein all the fragments that were left. At this juncture the waiters disappeared, conjecturing shrewdly that, if they stayed any longer, the feast might be too grand for them. In short, when all that remained of the dessert was bundled well up, the collegians got on the table, and, at the risk of cutting their feet with the fragments of the crockery, and the splinters of the glass, danced thereon, till everything was pounded, smashed, and broken. Then the table-cloth, with all it contained (the salad), was thrown *out of the* window; after it the table, then the *chairs, then* the rest of the furniture, and, when

there was nothing more to destroy, the frenzied youths thought they could do no better than throw themselves out; and all the thirteen "followed the leader," Alfonse, and jumped from the first floor into the court.

There is a saying, that over drunkards watches an especial Providence. But there are, it seems, two; for the students, on this occasion, found one of their own, which doubtless befriended them in this mad leap. Certain it is that none of the party met with the slightest accident, and, gloriously drunk, they rushed out into the street, after the most remarkable orgie that had taken place for some time at Poitiers.

They made a brilliant *entrée* into the *café*,—a general place of rendezvous for the students and officers when they were not at daggers drawn.

Two of the latter were playing at billiards when they entered. But Alfonse, without waiting till the game was ended, asked, or rather demanded, in an authoritative tone, that the table should be given up for a single pool to the thirteen.

Thinking that the object was, as usual, to decide who should pay for the dinner, or the *demi-tasse et chasse*, the players did not seem inclined to comply with this requisition; but when they learnt that a more momentous affair, a duel, was on foot, they hastened to lay down their cues. A duel! everything must yield to that!

There were but few military men present, for

that very day there was a *soirée* at the general-commandant's of the garrison; and those few consisted of veterans, who preferred passing the evening at the *café* to putting on silk stockings and shoes, or of *chenapans*, who in the regiment went by the name of *crânes*, or *bourreaux des crânes*. The old *grognards*, however, did not quit the room. The *chenapans* interchanged glances with each other; and one or two of the sub-lieutenants, who had come to take their *demi-tasse* before they went to the ball, also remained. They had all more or less formed a shrewd guess of what was to happen; and, for the honour of the service, waited for the quarrel to break out.

In our schools and garrisons at Paris we are totally unacquainted with that *esprit de corps* which engages a whole regiment, and an entire body of young men, in a duel, when two only are concerned; nor can we form a notion how slight a thing a duel is considered, when it is the custom to decide all questions sword in hand. Habit is all in all; and people soon learn to think no more of fighting than going to breakfast.

It becomes a general endemic; and a person who, lost in the world of Paris, where he is unknown, might hesitate about demanding satisfaction for an insult, however gross, would, in that atmosphere, be ready any day, or hour of the day, *to call a man* out for merely looking at him.

The pool was begun. Never did a party, when a

large sum of money depended on the issue of the game, play with more care and caution than those thirteen to decide which of them was to fight. By degrees the players lost their three lives, and the number was at last reduced to two; these two were the stranger guest and Alfonse. The lookers-on watched anxiously every stroke. Those balls, that as they rolled carried with them the fate of a man, were followed by earnest looks. The officers came nearer and nearer, and ranged themselves round the billiard. They were not a little interested to know whether they, or rather one of them—which they knew not—was to enter the lists with a freshman, no doubt unpractised in fencing, or with the most adroit and terrible duellist of the university.

The chances were against them. The stranger lost.

A singular excitement was occasioned by the disappearance of the last ball in the pocket. Some faces grew pale, but no one stirred from the spot where he had been standing as a spectator. Alfonse looked steadily round him, and made two or three times the circuit of the room, as though he were in search, but in vain, of some one worth quarrelling with. At last he perceived a sort of sub-lieutenant, originally drum-major and *maître d'armes*, and who boasted of having killed his thirty pequins, sitting quietly in a corner. Alfonse walked straight up to him, and, saluting him with a politeness that electrified the company, said, in his cool way,

"Monsieur, I am exceedingly distressed at the situation in which I find myself placed; but my honour is concerned, and you will allow me to engage yours."

Without further preliminaries, he gave him a severe hit in the face.

The officer, who little expected so abrupt and unanswerable a mode of provocation, sprang like a madman from his chair; and had not Alfonse, with the activity and nimbleness of a cat, leaped with one bound on the table, the ex-drum-major would probably have strangled him on the spot.

He was quickly at the aggressor's heels, when his own comrades stopped him of their own accord, saying,

"Come, come! no child's play or boxing! the thing is too serious! *C'est un combat à la mort!*"

"Where shall I find you to-morrow?" said one of the officers, addressing Alfonse.

"Fix your ground," was the reply.

"No to-morrows!" said the officer who had received the blow; "this instant!"

"This instant be it, if you please," replied Alfonse with the utmost indifference.

"I shall not sleep to-night till that blow is avenged!" said the other, foaming with rage.

"I, too, want to unnumb my hand. I have hurt my knuckles against your cheek-bones," said Alfonse.

"*Where would they fight at such a time of night as this?*" observed some of the officers.

"In the garden behind the *café*," cried the ancient *maître d'armes*; "a sword in one hand, and a billiard lamp in the other."

"But," said Alfonse, "I am tired. I know your style of fighting men, *Crâne*; you want to make me break ground, and drive me step by step round the garden. Don't think it, my lad. Besides, the lamp may go out. But, if you have no objection, the billiard-table will be a good arena. We shall be well lighted, and there will be no means of drawing back a foot."

"Be it so," said the other.

The doors were closed, and they laid hands on the waiters and the proprietor of the *café*, who were going to the police. The swords were then brought. The two adversaries cast lots for them, and then pulled off their coats and waistcoats, and unbuttoned their shirts, to show that they had nothing under.

Both then took their swords.

The officer wrapped round his hand a handkerchief, leaving both ends dangling. Alfonse neglected this practice, the object of which was to distract the attention of the adversary by the perpetual flutter of their two white points, thus to turn away his attention from the sword. But Alfonse had a manner of fighting of his own, and cared little for these petty proceedings. He never looked at the steel; but, fixing his eye on that of his antagonist, anticipated every motion that he made.

The two wrestlers, or gladiators I might say, g

on the table together, and, according to the terms or conditions agreed on between the students and the officers, rested their swords on the toes of their boots. A traveller from a commercial house who happened to be present, and could have no interest in the scene other than what its novelty excited, was fixed on to clap his hands three times, and at the third the swords were upraised in the air, and the two combatants came to guard.

A terrible silence reigned through the room, and for some seconds it was only broken by the clashing of the steel; for both parties, as they skirmished, were well aware that a single *faux pas* was death. The slightest stepping back, shrinking of the body, or leaping on one side, must inevitably prove fatal.

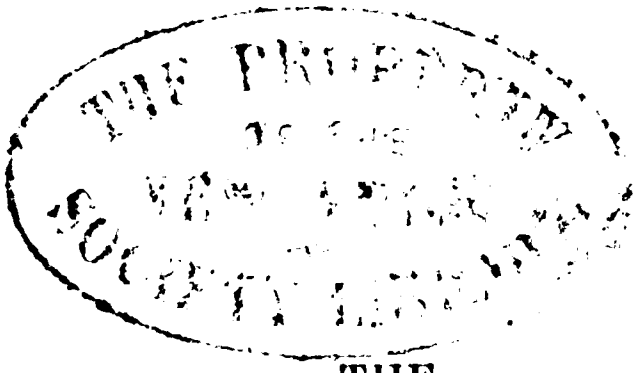
The officer was a head and shoulders taller than Alfonse, and looked as though he could crush him; but he little heeded this advantage, if advantage it was, for he by degrees lowered his body till he was right under the sword of his foe, and almost bent himself down upon the bed of the table. No other change in his attitude then took place.

All at once the officer, taking this posture for the effect of fear, made a furious lunge, which was parried with the greatest *sang-froid* and skill, and Alfonse allowed the officer to return to his ground without attempting to return it. His adversary was deceived by this sort of timid defence, and, *become more* adventurous, attacked him again with *increased fury*,—so much so, that, thrown off his

guard, his left foot quitted the cushion of the table, against which it had been fixed. Then it was that Alfonse made a rapid lunge at the officer's face. He endeavoured to regain the ground he had lost, to resume his position. The student would not give him time, and charged with impetuosity his disconcerted enemy, who could only avoid his thrusts by keeping his body bent backwards. Alfonse forced him to the edge of the table, when his foot tripped, and at that moment drove the sword up to the hilt in his heart.

The unhappy officer cried out "Hit! hit!" Then he raised himself to his full height, and fell backwards from the top of the table to the floor.

Awful was the sound that the weight of that body made upon the boards of the room! There was mixed up with it a feeling—a dread lest the dead man should hurt himself in falling. Never did I see—for I was present—so dreadful a contest! Never did I experience anything so frightful as the silence of those two men,—as the flashing of their swords by the light of the lamps,—as the fall of the vanquished, who, disappearing behind the table, seemed at once to have been engulfed in a tomb that opened from behind to receive him!



THE

NARRATIVE OF JOHN WARD GIBSON.

BY CHARLES WHITEHEAD,

AUTHOR OF "RICHARD SAVAGE," "THE SOLITARY," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

AS I do not intend that any human being shall read this narrative until after my decease, I feel no desire to suppress or to falsify any occurrence or event of my life, which I may at the moment deem of sufficient importance to communicate. I am aware how common a feeling, even amongst those who have committed the most atrocious crimes, this dread of entailing obloquy upon their memories is; but I cannot say that I participate in it. Perhaps I wish to offer some atonement to society for my many and grievous misdeeds; and, it may be, the disclosures I am about to make will be considered an insufficient expiation. I cannot help this now. There is One from whom no secrets are hid, by whom I am already judged.

I regret that I did not execute this wretched task *long ago.* Should I live to complete it, I shall hold

out longer than I expect; for I was never ready at my pen, and words sometimes will not come at my bidding. Besides, so many years have elapsed since the chief events I am about to relate took place, that even *they* no longer come before me with that distinctness which they did formerly. They do not torture me now, as of old times. The caustic has almost burnt them out of my soul. I will, however, give a plain, and, as nearly as I am able, a faithful statement. I will offer no palliation of my offences, which I do not from my soul believe should be extended to me.

I was born on the 23rd of October, 1787. My father was a watch-case maker, and resided in a street in the parish of Clerkenwell. I went a few months ago to look at the house, but it was taken down; indeed, the neighbourhood had undergone an entire change. I, too, was somewhat altered since then. I wondered at the time which of the two was the more so.

My earliest recollection recalls two rooms on a second floor meanly furnished; my father, a tall, dark man, with a harsh, unpleasing voice; and my mother, the same gentle, quiet being whom I afterwards knew her.

My father was a man who could, and sometimes did, earn what people in his station of life call a *great* deal of money; and yet he was constantly in *debt*, and frequently without the means of sub-

sistence. The cause of this, I need hardly say, was his addiction to drinking. Naturally of a violent and brutal temper, intoxication inflamed his evil passions to a pitch—not of madness, for he had not that excuse—but of frenzy. It is well known that gentleness and forbearance do not allay, but stimulate a nature like this; and scenes of violence and unmanly outrage are almost the sole reminiscences of my childhood. Perhaps the circumstance of my having been a sufferer in one of these ebullitions served to impress them more strongly upon my mind.

One evening I had been permitted to sit up to supper. My father had recently made promises of amendment, and had given an earnest of his intention by keeping tolerably sober during three entire days; and upon this festive occasion—for it was the anniversary of my mother's marriage—he had engaged to come home the instant he quitted his work. He returned, however, about one o'clock in the morning, and in his accustomed state. The very preparations for his comfort which he saw upon the table served as fuel to his savage and intractable passions. It was in vain that my mother endeavoured to soothe and to pacify him. He seized a stool on which I was accustomed to sit, and levelled a blow at her. She either evaded it, or the aim was not rightly directed, *for the stool* descended upon my head, and fractured *my skull.*

The doctor said it was a miracle that I recovered; and, indeed, it was many months before I did so. The unfeeling repulse I experienced from my father when, on the first occasion of my leaving my bed, I tottered towards him, I can never forget. It is impossible to describe the mingled terror and hatred which entered my bosom at that moment, and which never departed from it. It may appear incredible to some that a child so young could conceive so intense a loathing against its own parent. It is true, nevertheless; and, as I grew, it strengthened.

I will not dwell upon this wretched period of my life; for even to me, at this moment, and after all that I have done and suffered, the memory of that time is wretchedness.

One night, about two years afterwards, my father was brought home on a shutter by two watchmen. He had fallen into the New River on his return from a public-house in the vicinity of Sadler's Wells Theatre, and was dragged out just in time to preserve for the present a worthless and degraded life. A violent cold supervened, which settled upon his lungs; and, in about a month, the doctor informed my mother that her husband was in a rapid decline. The six months that ensued were miserable enough. My mother was out all day, toiling for the means of subsistence for a man who was not only ungrateful for her attentions, but who repelled them with the coarsest abuse.

I was glad when he died, nor am I ashamed to avow it; and I almost felt contempt for my mother when the poor creature threw herself upon the body in a paroxysm of grief, calling it by those endearing names which indicated a love he had neither requited nor deserved. Had I been so blessed as to have met with one to love me as that woman loved my father, I had been a different, and a better, and, perhaps, a good man.

"Will you not kiss your poor father, John, and see him for the last time?" said my mother on the morning of the funeral, as she took me by the hand.

No; I would not. I was no hypocrite then. It is true I was terrified at the sight of death, but that was not the cause. The manner in which he had repulsed me nearly three years before had never for a moment departed from my mind. There was not a day on which I did not brood upon it. I have often since recalled it, and with bitterness. I remember it now.

My mother had but one relation in the world—an uncle, possessed of considerable property, who resided near Luton, in Bedfordshire. She applied to him for some small assistance to enable her to pay the funeral expenses of her husband. Mr. Adams—for that was her uncle's name—sent her two guineas, accompanied by a request that she *would never* apply to, or trouble him again. There *was, however,* one person who stepped forward in this

extremity—Mr. Ward—a tradesman, with whom my mother had formerly lived as a servant, but who had now retired from business. He offered my mother an asylum in his house. She was to be his housekeeper; and he promised to take care of, and one day to provide for, me. It was not long before we were comfortably settled in a small private house in Coppice Row, where, for the first time in my life, I was permitted to ascertain that existence was not altogether made up of sorrow.

The old gentleman even conceived a strong liking, it may be called an affection, for me. He had stood godfather to me at my birth; and I believe, had I been his own son, he could not have treated me with more tenderness. He sent me to school, and was delighted at the progress I made, or appeared to make, which he protested was scarcely less than wonderful; a notion which the tutor was, of course, not slow to encourage and confirm. He predicted that I should inevitably make a bright man, and become a worthy member of society; the highest distinction, in the old gentleman's opinion, at which any human being could arrive. Alas! woe to the child of whom favourable predictions are hazarded! There never yet, I think, was an instance in which they were not falsified.

We had been residing with Mr. Ward about three years when a slight incident occurred which has impressed itself so strongly upon my memory that I

cannot forbear relating it. Mr. Ward had sent me with a message into the city, where, in consequence of the person being from home, I was detained several hours. When I returned, it appeared that Mr. Ward had gone out shortly after me, and had not mentioned the circumstance of his having dispatched me into the city. I found my mother in a state of violent agitation. She inquired where I had been, and I told her.

"I can hardly believe you, John," she said. "Are you sure you are telling me the truth?"

I was silent. She repeated the question. I would not answer; and she bestowed upon me a sound beating.

I bore my punishment with dogged sullenness, and retired into the back kitchen, in a corner of which I sat down, and, with my head between my hands, began to brood over the treatment I had received. Gradually there crept into my heart the same feeling I remembered to have conceived against my father—a feeling of bitter malignity revived by a fresh object. I endeavoured to quell it, to subdue it, but I could not. I recalled all my mother's former kindness to me, her present affection for me; and I reminded myself that this was the first time she had ever raised her hand against me. This thought only nourished the feeling, till the aching of my brain caused it to subside into moody stupefaction.

I became calmer in about an hour, and arose, and went into the front kitchen. My mother was seated at the window, employed at her needle; and, as she raised her eyes, I perceived they were red with weeping. I walked slowly towards her, and stood by her side.

"Mother!" I said, in a low and tremulous voice.

"Well, John, I hope you are a good boy now."

"Mother!" I repeated, "you don't know how you have hurt me."

"I am sorry I struck you so hard, child; I did not mean to do it;" and she averted her head.

"Not that—not that!" I cried passionately, beating my bosom with my clenched hands. "It's here, mother—here. I told you the truth, and you would not believe me."

"Mr. Ward has returned now," said my mother; "I will go and ask him;" and she arose.

I caught her by the gown. "Oh, mother!" I said, "this is the second time you would not believe me. You shall not go to Mr. Ward yet;" and I drew her into the seat. "Say first that you are sorry for it—only a word. Oh, do say it!"

As I looked up, I saw the tears gathering in her eyes. I fell upon my knees, and hid my face in her lap. "No, no; don't say anything now to me—don't—don't!" A spasm rose from my chest into my throat, and I fell senseless at her feet.

My mother afterwards told me that it was the day

of the year on which my father died, and she feared, from my lengthened stay, that I had come to harm. Dear, good woman! O that I might hope to see her once more, even though it were but for one moment,—for we shall not meet in heaven!

It was a cruel blow that deprived us of our kind protector! Mr. Ward died suddenly, and without a will; and my mother and I were left entirely unprovided with means. The old gentleman had often declared his intention of leaving my mother enough to render her comfortable during the remainder of her days, and had expressed his determination of setting me on in the world immediately I became of a proper age. It could hardly be expected that the heir-at-law would have fulfilled these intentions, even had he been cognizant of them. He was a low attorney, living somewhere in the neighbourhood of Drury Lane; and when he attended the funeral, and during the hour or two he remained in the house after it, it was quite clear that he had no wish to retain anything that belonged to his late relative except his property, and his valuable and available effects. He, however, paid my mother a month's wages in advance, presented me a dollar to commence the world with, shook hands with us, and wished us well.

It was not long before my mother obtained a situation *as servant* in a small respectable family in *King Street, Holborn*; and, as I was now nearly

eleven years of age, it was deemed by her friends high time that I should begin to get my own living. Such small influence, therefore, as my mother could command, was set on foot in my behalf; and I at length got a place as errand-boy to a picture dealer in Wardour Street, Oxford Street. The duties required of me in this situation, if not of a valuable description, were at least various. I went with messages, I attended sales, I kept the shop, I cleaned the knives and shoes, and, indeed, performed all those services which it is the province of boys to render, some of which are often created because there happens to be boys to do them.

This routine was, for a time, irksome. When I recalled the happy days I had spent under the roof of Mr. Ward, and the hopes and expectations he had excited within me of a more prosperous commencement of life,—hopes which his death had so suddenly destroyed,—it is not surprising that I should have felt a degree of discontent of my condition for which I had no other cause. As I sat by the kitchen fire of an evening when my day's work was done, I often pictured to myself the old man lying where we had left him in the churchyard, mouldering insensibly away, unconscious of rain, or wind, or sunshine, or the coming of night, or the approach of day, wrapped in a shroud which would outlast its wearer, and silently waiting for oblivion. These thoughts became less frequent as time wore on; but

I have never been able to dissociate the idea of death from these hideous conditions of mortality.

My master, Mr. Bromley, when I first entered his service, was a man of about the middle age, and of rather grave and formal manners. He had not a bad heart; but I have since discovered that what appeared to my boyish fancy a hard and cold selfishness was but the exterior of those narrow prejudices which too many of that class, if not of all classes, indulge, or rather inherit. He felt that a distance ought to be preserved between himself and his servant, and what he thought he ought to do, he always did; so that I had been with him a considerable period before he even addressed a word to me which business did not constrain him to utter.

He had a daughter, a girl about eighteen years of age. What a human being was Louisa Bromley! She was no beauty; but she had a face whose sweetness was never surpassed. I saw something like it afterwards in the faces of some of Raffaelle's angels. The broad and serene forehead, the widely-parted eyebrow, the inexplicable mouth, the soul that pervaded the whole countenance! I can never forget that face; and, when I call it back to memory now, I admire it the more because, to use the modern jargon, there was no *intellect* in it. *There was no thought*, no meditation or premeditation; *but there* was nature, and it was good-nature.

Her gentleness and kindness soon won upon me. To be kind to me was at all times the way to win me, and the only way. I cannot express the happiness I felt at receiving and obeying any command from her. A smile, or the common courtesy of thanks from her lips, repaid me a hundredfold for the performance of the most menial office.

I had now been with Mr. Bromley about four years. I employed my leisure, of which I had a great deal, in reading. All the books I could contrive to borrow, or that fell in my way, I devoured greedily. Nor did I confine myself exclusively to one branch of reading,—I cannot call it study. But my chief delight was to peruse the lives of the great masters of painting, to make myself acquainted with the history and the comparative merits of their several performances, and to endeavour to ascertain how many and what specimens existed in this country. I had also a natural taste for painting, and sometimes surprised my master by the remarks I ventured to make upon productions he might happen to purchase, or which had been consigned to him for sale.

Meanwhile, I was permitted to go out in the afternoon of each alternate Sunday. Upon these occasions I invariably went to see my mother. How well can I remember the gloomy underground kitchen in which I always found her, with her Bible before her on a small round table! With what pleased

attention did she listen to me when I descanted on the one subject upon which I constantly dwelt,—the determination I felt, as soon as I had saved money enough, and could see a little more clearly into my future prospects, to take her from service, that she might come and live with me. This was, in truth, the one absorbing thought—it might almost be termed the one passion—of my existence at that time. I had no other hope, no other feeling, than that of making her latter years a compensation for the misery she must have endured during my father's life.

One Sunday when I called, as usual, an old woman answered the door. She speedily satisfied my inquiries after my mother. She had been very ill for some days, and was compelled to keep her bed. My heart sank within me. I had seen her frequently, in former years, disfigured by her husband's brutality; I had seen her in pain, in anguish, which she strove to conceal; but I had never known her to be confined to her room. When I saw her now, young as I was, and unaccustomed to the sight of disease, I involuntarily shrank back with horror. She was asleep. I watched her for a few minutes, and then stole softly from the room, and returned to my master's house.

He was gone to church with his daughter. I followed thither, and waited under the portico till they came forth. I quickly singled them out from the

concourse issuing from the church doors. I drew my master aside, and besought him to spare me for a few days, that I might go and attend my mother, who was very ill.

"Is she dying?" he inquired.

I started. "No, not dying. O no!"

"Well, John, I can't spare you: we are very busy now, you know."

And what was that to me? It is only on occasions like these that the value of one's services is recognised. I thought of this at the time. I turned, in perplexity, to Louisa Bromley. She understood the silent appeal, and interceded for me. I loved her for that; I could have fallen down at her feet, and kissed them for it. She prevailed upon the old man to let me go.

The people of the house at which my mother was a servant were kind, and even friendly. They permitted me to remain with her.

I never left her side for more than half an hour at a time. She grew worse rapidly, but I would not believe it. My mother, however, was fully aware of her situation. She told me frequently, with a smile which I could not bear to see upon her face, it was so unlike joy, but it was to comfort me—she told me that she knew she was about to die, and she endeavoured to impress upon me those simple maxims of conduct for my future life which she had herself derived from her parents. She must not die—must

not; and I heard with impatience, and heedlessly, the advice she endeavoured to bestow upon me.

She died. The old nurse told me she was dead. It could not be—she was asleep. My mother had told me not an hour before that she felt much better, and wanted a little sleep; and at that moment her hand was clasped in mine. The lady of the house took me gently by the arm, and, leading me into an adjoining room, began to talk to me in a strain, I suppose, usually adopted upon such occasions, for I knew not what she said to me.

In about two hours I was permitted to see my mother again. There was a change—a frightful change! The nurse, I remember, said something about her looking like one asleep. I burst into a loud laugh. Asleep! that blank, passive, impenetrable face like sleep—petrified sleep! I enjoined them to leave me, and they let me have my own way; for, boy as I was, they were frightened at me.

I took my mother's hand and wrung it violently. I implored her to speak to me once more, to repeat that she still loved me, to tell me that she forgave all my faults, all my omissions, all my sins towards her. And then I knew she *was* dead, and fell down upon my knees to pray; but I could not. Something told me that I ought not—something whispered that I ought rather to—— But I was struck *senseless upon the* floor.

The mistress of my mother, who was a good and worthy woman, offered to pay her funeral expenses; but I would not permit it. Not a farthing would I receive from her. Out of my own savings I buried her.

If I could have wept—but I never could weep—when this calamity befell me, I think that impious thought would never have entered my brain. That thought was, that the Almighty was unjust to deprive me of the only being in the world who loved me, who understood me, who knew that I had a heart, and that, when it was hurt and outraged, my head was not safe—not to be trusted. That thought remained with me for years.

CHAPTER II.

Five years elapsed. The grief occasioned by my mother's death having in some measure subsided, my thoughts became concentrated upon myself with an intensity scarcely to be conceived. A new passion took possession of my soul. I would distinguish myself, if possible, and present to the world another instance of friendless poverty overcoming and defying the obstacles and impediments to its career. With this view constantly before me, I read even more diligently than heretofore. I made myself a proficient in the principles of mathematics; I acquired some knowledge of mechanical science; but, above all, I took every opportunity of improving

my taste in the fine arts. This last accomplishment was soon of infinite service to me; many gentlemen who frequented our shop were pleased to take much notice of me; my master was frequently rallied upon having a servant who knew infinitely more of his business than himself; and my opinion on one or two remarkable occasions was taken in preference to that of my employer.

Mr. Bromley naturally and excusably might have conceived no slight envy of my acquirements; but he was not envious. Shall I be far wrong when I venture to say that few men are so where pecuniary interest points out the impolicy of their encouraging that feeling? Be this as it may, he treated me with great kindness; and I was grateful for it, really and strongly so. I had been long since absolved from the performance of those menial duties which had been required of me when I first entered his service; my wages were increased to an extent which justified me in calling them by the more respectable term, salary; I was permitted to live out of the house; and in all respects the apparent difference and distance between my master and myself were sensibly diminished.

During this period of five years I never received one unkind word or look from Louisa Bromley; and the affection I bore towards this young woman, which was *the* affection a brother might have felt, *caused me to strive* by every means at my command

to advance the fortunes of her father. And, indeed, the old man had become so attached to me —partly, and I doubt not unconsciously, because my talents were of value to him—that I should not have had the heart, even had my inclinations prompted me, to desert him. It is certain that I might have improved my own position by doing so.

At this time Frederick Steiner became acquainted with Mr. Bromley. He was a young man about thirty years of age, of German descent, and possessed of some property. The manners of Steiner were plausible, he was apparently candid, his address indicated frankness and entire absence of guile, and he was handsome; yet I never liked the man. It is commonly supposed that women are gifted with the power of detecting the worst points of the characters of men at the first glance. This gift is withheld when they first behold the man they are disposed to love. This, at any rate, was the case with Louisa Bromley.

Not to dwell upon this part of my narrative, in a few months Bromley's daughter was married to Steiner, who was taken into partnership.

I must confess I was deeply mortified at this. I myself had conceived hopes of one day becoming Bromley's partner; and my anxiety for the happiness of his daughter led me to doubt whether she had not made a choice which she might have occasion afterwards to deplore. However, things went on

smoothly for a time. Steiner was civil, nay, even friendly to me; and the affection he evinced towards his little boy, who was born about a year after the marriage, displayed him in so amiable a light, that I almost began to like the man.

It was not very long, however, before Steiner and I came to understand each other more perfectly. He was possessed with an overweening conceit of his taste in pictures, and I, on my part, obstinately adhered to my own opinion, whenever I was called upon to pronounce one. This led to frequent differences, which commonly ended in a dispute, which Bromley was in most cases called upon to decide. The old man, doubtless, felt the awkwardness of his position; but, as his interest was inseparable from a right view of the question at issue, he commonly decided with me.

Upon these occasions Steiner vented his mortification in sneers at my youth, and ironical compliments to me upon my cleverness and extraordinary genius; for both of which requisites, as he was signally deficient in them, he especially hated me. I could have repaid his hatred with interest, for I kept it by me in my own bosom, and it accumulated daily.

I know not how it happened that the child wound itself round my heart, but it was so. It seemed as *though there* were a necessity that, in proportion as *I detested* Steiner, I must love his child. But the

boy, from the earliest moment he could take notice of anything, or could recognise anybody, had attached himself to me; and I loved him, perhaps for that cause, with a passionate fondness which I can scarcely imagine to be the feeling even of a parent towards his child.

If I were not slow by nature to detect the first indications of incipient estrangement, I think I should have perceived, in less than two years after Steiner had been taken into partnership by Mr. Bromley, a growing reserve, an uneasy constraint in the manners of the latter, and a studied, an almost formal civility on the part of his daughter. I now think there must have been something of the kind, although it was not at the time apparent to me. I am certain, at all events, there was less cordiality, less friendship, in the deportment of Mrs. Steiner towards me—a circumstance which I remember to have considered the result of her altered situation. The terms of almost social equality, however, were no longer observed.

One Mr. Taylor, a very extensive picture-dealer, who lived in the Haymarket, made several overtures to me about this time. He had heard many gentlemen of acknowledged taste speak of me in the highest terms; and, in truth, I was now pretty generally recognised throughout the trade as one of the best judges of pictures in London. I had more than one interview, of his own seeking, with this

gentleman. He made me a most flattering and advantageous offer: he would have engaged my services for a certain number of years, and at the expiration of the period he would have bound himself to take me into partnership. I had received many similar offers before, although none that could be for a moment compared, on the score of emolument and stability, with this. I rejected those for the sake of Bromley: I rejected this for my own.

Shall I be weak enough to confess it? The respect I bore the old man even now, my affection for his daughter, my love for the child, went some part of the way towards a reason for declining Taylor's proposal; but it did not go all the way. I hated Steiner so intensely, so mortally, and he supplied me daily with such additional cause of hatred, that I felt a species of excitement, of delight, in renewing from time to time my altercations with him—a delight which was considerably increased by the fact that he was quite incapable of competing with me in argument. There was another reason, which added a zest, if anything could do so, to the exquisite pleasure I derived from tormenting him,—the belief I entertained that Bromley and himself dared not part with me: they knew my value too well. Bromley, at least, I was well aware, was conscious enough of that.

I had been attending one day a sale of pictures, the property of a certain nobleman whose collection,

thirty years ago, was the admiration of connoisseurs. Mr. —— (I need not give his name, but he is still living), had employed me to bid for several amongst the collection, and had requested my opinion of a few, the merit of which, although strongly insisted upon, he was disposed to doubt. When I returned in the evening, I saw Steiner in the shop waiting for me, and—for hate is quick at these matters, quicker even than love—I knew that he meditated a quarrel. I was not mistaken. He looked rather pale, and his lip quivered slightly.

"And so," said he, "you have been holding several conversations with Mr. Taylor lately, haven't you, Mr. Gibson?"

"Who told you that I had been holding conversations with him?"

"No matter: you have done so. Pray may I ask the tenor of them?"

"Mr. Taylor wished to engage my services," I replied, "and I declined to leave Mr. Bromley."

"That's not very likely," said Steiner with a sneer.

Steiner was right there; it was not very likely. He might with justice consider me a fool for not having embraced the offer.

"I suppose," pursued Steiner in the same tone, "Mr. —— would follow you to your new situation. *You* would select his pictures for him as usual, *doubtless*."

"Doubtless I should," said I with a cool smile that enraged him. "Mr. —— would follow *me* certainly, and many others would follow *him*, Mr. Steiner."

"I'll tell you what it is," cried Steiner, and a flush overspread his face; "Taylor has been using you for his own purposes. You have been endeavouring to undermine our connection, and have been serving him at the same time that you have taken our wages."

It was not a difficult matter at any time to move me to anger. I approached him, and with a glance of supreme scorn replied, "It is false!—nay, I don't fear you—it 's a lie,—an infamous lie!"

Steiner was a very powerful man, and in the prime of manhood; I was young, and my limbs were not yet fixed,—not set. He struck me a violent blow on the face. I resisted as well as I was able; but what can weakness do against strength, even though it have justice on its side? He seized me by the cravat, and, forcing his knuckles against my throat, dealt me with the other hand a violent blow on the temple, and felled me to the earth. O that I had never risen from it! It had been better.

When I came to my senses (for the blow had for a while stunned me) I arose slowly, and with difficulty. Steiner was still standing over me in malignant triumph, and I could see in the expression

of his eyes the gratified conviction he felt of having repaid the long score of ancient grudges in which he was indebted to me. His wife was clinging to his arm, and as I looked into her face I perceived terror in it, certainly; but there was no sympathy—nay, that is not the word—I could not have borne that; there was no sorrow, no interest, no concern about me. My heart sickened at this. Bromley was there also. He appeared slightly perplexed; and, misconceiving the meaning of my glance, said coldly, but hurriedly, "You brought it entirely upon yourself, Mr. Gibson."

I turned away, and walked to the other end of the shop for my hat. I had put it on, and was about leaving them. As I moved towards the door, I was nearly throwing down the little boy, who had followed me, and was now clinging to the skirt of my coat, uttering in imperfect accents my name. I looked down. The little thing wanted to come to me to kiss me. Sweet innocent! there was one yet in the world to love me. I would have taken the child in my arms; but Mrs. Steiner exclaimed abruptly, "Come away, Fred—do; I insist upon it, sir." From that time, and for a long time, I hated the woman for it.

I retreated to my lodging, and slunk to my own room with a sense of abasement, of degradation, of infamy, I had never felt before. Mrs. Matthews, the woman of the house, who had answered the

door to me, and had perceived my agitation, followed me upstairs. She inquired the cause, and was greatly shocked at the frightful contusion upon my temple. I told her all, for my heart was nigh bursting, and would be relieved. She hastened downstairs for an embrocation, which the good woman had always by her, and, returning with it, began to bathe my forehead.

"Wouldn't I trounce the villain for it," she said, as she continued to apply the lotion.

"What did you say, Mrs. Matthews?" and I suddenly looked up.

"Why, that I 'd have the rascal punished,—that 's what I said. Hanging 's too good for such a villain."

The kind creature—I was a favourite of hers—talked a great deal more to the same effect, and at last left me to procure a bottle of rum, which, much to her surprise (for I was no drinker), I requested her to fetch me.

How exquisite it was,—what a luxury to be left alone, all to myself! Punished!—the woman had said truly,—he must be punished. They, too, must not escape. The ingratitude of the old man—his insolence of ingratitude—was almost as bad as the conduct of Steiner. After what I had done for him!—an old servant who had indeed served him! —*who had refused* a certainty, a respectable station *in society,* perhaps a fortune, for his sake! And he

must escape,—he must go unpunished,—he must revel in the consciousness of the impunity of his insult! *No.* I swore that deeply; and, lest it should be possible that I could falter, or perhaps renounce my intention, I confirmed that oath with another, which I shudder to think of, and must not here set down.

I emptied the bottle of rum, but I was not drunk. When I went to bed I was as sober as I am at this moment. I did not go to bed to sleep. My senses were in a strange ferment. The roof of my head seemed to open and shut, and I fancied I could hear the seething of my brain below. I presently fell into a kind of stupor.

It was past midnight when I recovered from this swoon, and I started from the bed to my feet. Something had been whispering in my ear, and I listened for a moment in hideous expectation that the words—for I did hear words—would be repeated; but all was silent. I struck a light, and after a time became more composed. Even the furniture of the room was company to me. Before morning I had shaped my plan for revenge, and it was in accordance with the words that had been spoken to me. Oh, my God! what weak creatures we are! This fantasy possessed, pervaded me; it *did* not grow—it did not increase from day to day—*it* came, and it overcame me.

I returned the next morning to Bromley's house.

and requested to see Steiner. I apologised to him for the words I had used on the previous day, and requested to be permitted to remain in my situation, if Mr. Bromley would consent to it, until I could turn myself round; and I hoped, in the mean time, that what had taken place would be overlooked and forgotten. Steiner received me with a kind of civil arrogance, and went to confer with his partner. They presently returned together, and my request, after an admonitory lecture, rather confusedly delivered, from Bromley, was acceded to; Steiner warning me at the same time to conduct myself with more humility for the future, under pain of similar punishment.

I did do so, and for six months nothing could exceed the attention I paid to business, the zeal I evinced upon every occasion, the forbearance I exercised under every provocation. And I had need of forbearance. Bromley had been entirely perverted by his son-in-law; and the kind old man of former years was changed into a morose and almost brutal blackguard—to me—only to me. Mrs. Steiner had likewise suffered the influence of her husband to undermine, and for the time to destroy, her better feelings; and she treated me upon all occasions, not merely with marked coldness, but with positive insult. I need hardly say that Steiner enjoyed almost *to satiety the* advantage he had gained over me. *Even the very* servants of the house took the cue

from their superiors, and looked upon me with contempt and disdain. The little boy alone, who had received express commands never to speak to me, sometimes found his way into the shop, and as he clung round my neck, and bestowed unasked kisses upon my cheek, my hatred of the rest swelled in my bosom almost to bursting.

The persecution I endured thus long was intense torment to me: the reader, whoever he may be, will probably think so. He will be mistaken. It was a source of inconceivable, of exquisite pleasure. It was a justification to me; it almost made the delay of my vengeance appear sinful.

It was now the 22nd of December, 1808. I cannot refrain from recording the date. Steiner had been during the last six weeks at Antwerp, and was expected to return in a day or two. He had purchased at a sale in that city a great quantity of pictures, which had just arrived, and were now in the shop. They were severally of no great value, but the purchase had brought Bromley's account at the banker's to a very low ebb. Mrs. Steiner and the child were going to spend the Christmas holidays with some relatives residing at Canterbury. She passed through the shop silently, and without even noticing me, and hurried the boy along lest he should wish—and he did make an effort to do so—to take his farewell of me. It was evening at the time, and Bromley was in his back parlour: I was

busy in the shop that evening; it was business of my own, which I transacted secretly. Having completed it, I did what was rather unusual with me; I opened the door of the parlour, and bade Bromley good night.

All that evening I hovered about the neighbourhood. I had not resolution to go from it. Now that the time was come when I should be enabled, in all human probability, to fulfil, to glut my vengeance, my heart failed me. The feeling which had supported me during the last six months, which had been more necessary to my soul than daily sustenance to my body, had deserted me then, but that by a powerful effort I contrived to retain it. While I deplored having returned to Bromley's employment, and the abject apology I had made to Steiner, that very step and its consequences made it impossible for me to recede. It must be. It was my fate to do it, and it was theirs that it should be done.

What trivial incidents cling to the memory sometimes, when they are linked by association to greater events! I was, I remember, standing at the door of a small chandler's shop in Dean Street, almost lost to myself, and to all that was passing about me.

The woman of the house tapped me on the shoulder.

"*Will* you be so good," she said, "as to move on?

You are preventing my customers from entering the shop."

"My good woman," I said, "I hope there is no harm in my standing here?"

"Not much harm," replied the woman good-humouredly. "I hope you have been doing nothing worse to-day."

I started, and gazed at the woman earnestly. She smiled.

"Why, bless the man! you look quite flurried. I haven't offended you, I hope?"

"No, no!" I muttered hastily, and moved away. The agony I endured for the next hour I cannot describe.

I passed Bromley's house several times from the hour of nine till half-past. All was silent—all still. What if my design should not take effect? I almost hoped that it would not; and yet the boy who cleaned out the shop must inevitably discover it in the morning. I trembled at the contemplation of that, and my limbs were overspread with a clammy dew. It was too late to make a pretext of business in the shop at that time of night. Bromley was at home, and might, nay, would, suspect me. I resolved to be on the premises the first thing in the morning, and retired in a state of mind to which no subsequent occurrence of my life was ever capable of reducing me.

It was about half-past eleven o'clock, or nearer to

twelve, that the landlord of the Green Man, in Oxford Street, entered the parlour where I was sitting, gazing listlessly upon two men who were playing a game at dominos.

"There is a dreadful fire," said he, "somewhere on the other side of the street; in Berwick or Wardour Street, I think."

I sprang to my feet, and rushed out of the house, and turning into Hanway Yard, ran down Tottenham Court Road, crossed the fields (they are now built upon), and never stopped till I reached Pancras Church.

As I leaned against the wall of the churchyard some men came along.

"Don't you see the fire, master?" said one, as they passed me.

Then, for the first time, I did see the fire, tingeing the clouds with a lurid and dusky red, and at intervals casting a shower of broken flame into the air, which expanded itself in wide-spreading scintillations.

God of heaven! what had I done? Why was I here? I lived in the neighbourhood of Bromley's house, and they would be sending for me. The landlord, too, would afterwards remember having seen me in his parlour, and informing me of the fire in the neighbourhood, and I should be discovered. *These thoughts* were the duration of a moment, but *they decided* me. I ran back again in a frenzy of

remorse and terror, and in a few minutes was in Wardour Street.

The tumult and confusion were at their height. The noise of the engines, the outcries of the firemen, the uproar of the crowd, faintly shadowed forth the tumult in my mind at that moment. I made my way through the dense mass in advance of me, and at length reached the house.

Bromley had just issued from it, and was wringing his hands, and stamping his naked feet upon the pavement. He recognised me, and seized me wildly by the arms.

"O my good God! Gibson," said he, "my child!"

"What child—what child?" cried I eagerly.

"Mine—mine! and the infant! they are in there!"

"They are gone out of town: don't you remember?" I thought the sudden fright had deprived him of his senses.

"No, no, no! they were too late—the coach was gone!"

With a loud scream I dashed the old man from me, and flew to the door, which was open. I made my way through the stifling smoke that seemed almost to block up the passage, and sprang upstairs. The bedroom door was locked. With a violent effort I wrenched off the lock, and rushed into the room.

All was darkness; but presently a huge tongue of flame swept through the doorway, and, running up the wall, expanded upon the ceiling; and then I saw a figure in white darting about the room with angular dodgings. like a terrified bird in a cage.

"Where is the child?" I exclaimed, in a voice of frenzy.

Mrs. Steiner knew me, and ran towards me, clasping me with both arms. She shook her head wildly, and pointed she knew not where.

"Here, Gibson—here," cried the child, who had recognised my voice.

I threw off my coat immediately, and, seizing the boy, wrapped him closely in it.

"This way, madam—this way; at once, for Heaven's sake!" and I dragged her to the landing.

There was hell about me then! The flames, the smoke, the fire, the howlings; it was a living hell! But there was a shriek at that moment! Mrs. Steiner had left my side. Gracious heavens! she had been precipitated below! A sickness came upon me then—a sensation of being turned sharply round by some invisible power; and, with the child tightly clasped in my arms, I was thrown violently forward into the flames, that seemed howling and yearning to devour me.

CHAPTER III.

When I recall to memory the circumstances of that terrible night, I wonder that I did not, either by word or action, betray myself. I do not know—for I am no adept at the solution of moral questions—whether men are equally provided by nature with what is termed conscience; but I am certain that there are some who can not only conceal but suppress it. It was not until many years afterwards that I was made fully conscious of the enormity of my crime; and then conscience came too late, as it always does.

The child and myself were rescued from the burning ruins without having sustained any very serious injury; but Mrs. Steiner was so frightfully disfigured as to leave small hope of her recovery, and none of her ever regaining her former appearance. She was conveyed, in a state of insensibility, to the house of a neighbour, who had offered Bromley and his family a temporary asylum; and, when the fire was at length got under, I returned to my own lodging with the gratifying conviction that the chief portion of the most valuable property was destroyed.

It is indeed true that, far from feeling any compunction for the sin I had committed, I gloried in its consummation. They who had so often sneered at my dependent condition, who had made

their superiority of circumstances a ground for the assumption of superiority in all other points,—to have brought them at last to my own level, it was something. Whilst I confess this, I must, in justice to myself, mention that I was not at the time aware of the dangerous condition of Mrs. Steiner, but concluded that in a few days she would be restored. I was, at least, willing to believe so.

But when the sense of satisfied vengeance began to abate, a feeling of considerable anxiety with regard to myself, and the conduct I ought to pursue, occupied its place. Was it likely—was it possible that they would suspect me? There was no evidence—or rather, was there any?—that could convict me. It now occurred to me that I had not taken all such precautions against detection as, the act once committed, my fears pointed out as necessary. And yet, hitherto, I had shown myself a proficient in the duplicity which they had taught me to practise. But now a comfortable reflection presented itself: I was even mad enough to imagine that I saw the immediate agency of Providence in the accident which had prevented Mrs. Steiner and the child from leaving London on that evening. The exertions I had made to save them must furnish, at once, conclusive testimony of my innocence: I had *nothing to fear* from calumny or malicious conjecture. *In that* certainty I hugged myself, and to-

wards daybreak fell into a sound and refreshing sleep, from which I did not awake until noon.

And yet, notwithstanding the state of composure to which I had succeeded in bringing myself, I felt that it would be necessary to attach myself to Bromley as closely as possible, lest, during my absence, his own thoughts, or the whispered surmises of others, should breed suspicions against me. I arose, therefore, and proceeded to his temporary lodging.

I found him, as I expected, surrounded by his neighbours and friends, the majority of whom very liberally offered the old man such assistance as is to be extracted from advice. Far from seizing the opportunity, when we were alone, of indulging a vulgar triumph at his expense, I endeavoured to soothe and to console him, to cheer him and to raise his spirits; reminding him (I could not forbear that one luxury) that there was no situation in life that honest industry could not render respectable; that, although this calamity had befallen him, he might yet, late as it was, recover himself, and eventually raise up for himself kind and attached friends—*as I had done.*

I uttered these last words in a sufficiently marked and emphatic manner; and yet Bromley felt them not, or did not appear to heed them. Indeed, he seemed, as yet, hardly conscious of the extent of his misfortune; merely expressing great anxiety for

Steiner's return, as though that event were the only matter to be thought about. His manner to me was as cold, distant, and supercilious as before. I knew, however, that this apathy could not last long,—that the truth must soon find its level; and I was perfectly content to wait till it did do so.

If I had not, long ago, acquired an ingenuity in forging palliations and excuses upon my own heart, I should have been overwhelmed with remorse and horror when the dreadful situation of Mrs. Steiner was made known to me. As it was, I felt deeply shocked; but not more so, I endeavoured to make myself believe, than I should have been had she suffered in other circumstances. I was innocent of this—I strove to think so—because I had not contemplated it. I argued the case too much with my own mind to have been right.

However this might be, I was much relieved to hear, about a month afterwards, that she was out of danger; but it was added, she was so shockingly altered that I should not recognise her. I was not much concerned at this: I had no wish to perpetuate the memory of a face that had so often looked upon me with undeserved contempt and scorn; and I had ceased to feel the slightest interest in the fate of a person who, owing probably her own life and that of the child to my exertions, had not even repaid me by the common gratitude of *acknowledgment*. But to return.

During three days that succeeded the fire I was almost constantly employed in Bromley's business, by which time a tolerable estimate was completed of the extent of his misfortune. The intervals of my leisure were occupied with the old man; and many occasions were afforded me of watching the gradual operation of the truth, as it silently and surely made its way to his heart. At first, the melancholy state of his daughter was his chief, if not sole affliction; next, the absence of Steiner was deplored; until, at length, the one calamity, the irreparable loss, extending over the future, lay clearly before him. I, too, could see as clearly that my vengeance had been amply fulfilled; and I was satisfied.

Oh! it was a humiliating spectacle to witness the abject creature lamenting the downfall of the base image he had set up, and craving pity on a plea whose validity he had so often denied. He was once more to become one of those who "prey upon the middle classes,"—it was his favourite expression,—for he had no longer "a capital;" something which, in his opinion, included all the cardinal virtues, and religion into the bargain. I suspect there is a very large sect in this country holding the same faith.

I had been too much occupied with Bromley's affairs, on the fourth day, to call upon him before the afternoon. As I entered the room, he arose and met me half way.

"Gibson," said he hurriedly, and in some agitation, "you had better come again in an hour or two. But stay; I don't know what to say." He paused. "What is best to be done?"

"What is the matter?" I inquired.

"Mr. Steiner is returned;" and he pointed to a door which communicated with an adjoining chamber.

"Well, sir, I am glad of it, for your sake. You have been anxious for his return."

Bromley looked perplexed, but presently motioned me to take a seat. "You may as well see him at once, perhaps," he remarked.

I bowed. "I shall be very glad to see him."

At this moment Steiner, who, I think, had been listening, opened the door, and, flinging it after him, strode into the middle of the room. There was a kind of white calmness in his face, which I knew well how to interpret.

"Well, this is a very pretty piece of business; indeed, is it!" said he. "What do *you* think, Mr. Gibson?"

"It is a very sad one," I answered.

"Have you no conception how it originated?" he inquired.

"None whatever."

"Do you mean to say," he resumed with quickness, "that you do not know how the fire was caused—by what—by whom?"

"*I do.*"

Steiner took Bromley aside, and began to talk to him in a low tone. It was a relief to me, his doing so at that moment. A sudden faintness, a desertion of the vital powers, had in an instant reduced me to the helplessness of a child; I dreaded the interview which I foresaw was about to take place. He suspected me, that was certain; perhaps had obtained some clue—some witness against me. I felt that I could not confront him like an innocent man; I had not even strength to endeavour to do so.

"Had you not better be seated?" said Steiner, turning towards me, for I had remained standing motionless.

Steiner sat for a while absorbed in thought, with his eyes fixed upon the ground; but, at length, I could perceive his glance slowly stealing upward from my feet, until it settled itself upon my face. I could not bear the immovable gaze with which he regarded me: in vain did I attempt to withdraw my eyes from his—some horrible fascination constrained me; I could feel that there was not a thought of my soul hidden from him,—that my crime was legibly written on my countenance,—and I was almost tempted to shriek out the confession which was struggling in my throat.

"As there is a God in heaven," cried Steiner, striking his knee with one hand, and pointing towards me with triumphant malignity, "that man set fire to the premises! Look at him!" he added,

seizing Bromley by the arm. "Would not that face alone convict him in a court of justice?"

Bromley, I think, arose, and laid hold upon Steiner.

"For Heaven's sake!" said he, "do not be so violent. You don't know that,—we don't know it yet. Speak, Gibson: what do you say? You shall be heard: what answer have you to make to this?"

None. I made an effort to speak—to say I know not what—but I could not utter a syllable. How I got out of the room I cannot remember. I must have slunk out, like a beaten hound.

When I recovered myself, I found that I had sunk upon a window-seat on the first landing of the stairs. There was a slight noise above. Steiner had attempted to follow me, but was prevented by Bromley. My presence of mind returned to me of a sudden, and I sprang from the seat. Of what unmanly, paltry weakness had I been guilty! What cause could they have of suspicion? what *right* had they to suspect me? Yes; they knew their persecution of me: they felt that they had earned this reprisal at my hands,—that I was justified in returning evil for evil. And they had extorted a tacit confession, at least, of the justice of their accusation. No—no, I was not to be overreached quite so easily; that must not be. The blood boiled through my veins, and pressed upon my brain with a dreadful *weight.* I rushed upstairs, and flung open the door.

I cannot describe the feelings that possessed me at the moment. I had almost brought myself to the belief that I was an injured man, and yet I was aware of the necessity of counterfeiting a violence of resentment which should satisfy my accusers that I was so. At all events, there was that in my face, as I slowly approached Steiner, which appalled him; for he retreated some paces. I flung my open hand from me, and seized him by the collar. I trembled violently, but my words came clearly and distinctly from me.

"Steiner!" said I, "you have said that I set fire to the house; you have accused me of it; you shall prove it—I will make you attempt to prove it!"

Here Bromley rushed between, and besought me to "exercise more temper." I cast him violently from me.

"And you," I said, turning towards him,—"you, who in conjunction, leagued with this villain, have been diligent, have set your poor wits to work, to make my life, after it has been devoted to you, a curse to myself—you wish, at length, to compass my death; but I shall baffle you. I defy you both, as much—I can say no more—as I despise you."

Steiner, as I said this, released himself from my grasp, and endeavoured to assume a threatening aspect, which, however, failed of its intended effect.

"I have accused you, Gibson," said he, "and I *will* prove it."

I smiled scornfully at him. He was perplexed, and would have appealed to Bromley.

"Did you not see him when I said so?" he exclaimed.

Bromley made no reply, but raised his hands, as though unwilling to take further part in the business.

"Is it not strange," resumed Steiner, addressing me, "that the fire should have commenced in the shop — that it should have made such progress before it was discovered—that nothing whatever of value should have been preserved?"

I turned from him, and approached Bromley.

"Tell him," I said calmly, "for you know it, the lie he has this moment uttered; your daughter, and his child, were preserved by me, and at the hazard of my life: the thanks you owe me you may pay—when you pay your other debts."

Bromley was distressed—I could see that; but I was in no humour to bate a jot of the advantage I had gained. "You and your accomplice," I continued, "know where I am to be found: I shall be forthcoming, I promise you. Good morning to you."

It was now no time for supineness or fruitless meditation. I took advantage of the opportunity they had afforded me, and informed the neighbourhood of the accusation they had launched against *me, and of the* steps they intended to take. That *was wisely done.* Who could believe me guilty of

this act, who was the first to promulgate the charge? I suborned a favourable verdict before my enemies commenced operations.

Steiner was as good as his word. He obtained a warrant against me, and I was brought before a magistrate. But what could this avail? He had no evidence: not the slightest symptom of guilt was observable upon my face. My worst enemy, even Steiner himself, could extract, could infer nothing unfavourable from my manners or demeanour. I was conscious innocence; and when I collectedly, and with a manifest desire that the circumstances should be minutely related, constrained Bromley to testify to the efforts I had made—the successful efforts—to preserve his daughter and her child, a murmur of indignant horror at the baseness of Steiner and himself pervaded the justice-room. I was discharged, not only without a stain upon my character, but with many compliments upon my heroic conduct; and as I left the office, the admiring plaudits of the multitude, and the yells without with which they assailed my persecutors, sanctioned the justice of the magistrate's decision.

I need hardly say that I went on my way rejoicing. I had not proceeded far, however, before Steiner overtook me. He tapped me on the shoulder; I was not sorry that he had followed me: I was glad of the opportunity of enjoying my triumph to the full.

"You have escaped," said he, "for the present; but you shall not escape me. We shall yet"—and he shook his fist in my face—"we shall yet be too much for you."

How exquisitely I enjoyed the empty menace! "Steiner," I replied, "do you intend me a personal outrage? If you do, I 'll have you taken into custody forthwith. Here!" and I beckoned to some men who were already collected on the other side of the street.

He was daunted. "I shall not lose sight of you," he muttered. "I mean what I have said—I shall see you again!"

"You shall, indeed," I said calmly; "and that very shortly. You owe me, I recollect, six months' salary—nearly a hundred pounds. I hope, when I call upon you, it will be convenient to you to pay it."

Steiner had not expected this. He was dumb. It was an inconvenient circumstance.

"Oh! oh!" I said, with a smile of contempt "I have, it seems, escaped your malice, and this had escaped your memory. You may keep it. I hope, Steiner, you may live to want it. This one hope of mine I think likely to be fulfilled."

CHAPTER IV.

When moralists purpose to deter you from vice, *they tell you* how insidious it is; how it strengthens *by encouragement*; how impossible it is, when it

has once taken root, to eradicate it: when they desire to reclaim you from it, they say how easy it is to fulfil a good resolution: "throw but a stone, the giant dies;" one conquest gained makes way for another, &c. Convenient moralists!

Perhaps I was not originally formed of such stuff as saints are made of; or perhaps the deed I had done, and its results, threw me into a frame of mind in which vice commends itself most easily to one's adoption; for no sooner had I left Bromley and his partner, as I believed, for ever, than I changed my lodging, and, neglecting the opportunities which had been presented to me, surrendered myself to a course of the lowest and most depraved dissipation, until the money I had been years in saving was expended, and the peremptory conditions of existence were once more offered to my acceptance. At this time, the thought of committing suicide entered my mind; but, although I did not encourage it, I take no credit for any religious scruples that withheld me. It is no less true that the habitual practice of vice unfits a man for death, than that it renders him afraid to die. We all look forward to some amendment of our condition; many place their faith in the world to come, many rely upon their chances in this. I was one of the latter class.

At length, in the last extremity, I applied to Mr. Taylor, of whom I have before spoken. He received me kindly enough, sympathised with my misfortunes,

was indignant at the treatment I had experienced from my former masters. But it is one thing to sue, and another to be sought. He would by no means renew the flattering offers he had previously made me. "What a pity it was," he said, "that I had not come to him immediately I left Bromley." And then, although the accusation against me had so entirely fallen to the ground, the world was so censorious—so uncharitable! In a word, however base the world might be, I found Mr. Taylor thoroughly a man of it; and accordingly, like others who drive hard bargains, he thought the most likely way of getting me cheaply was to depreciate me.

During the two years I remained with Mr. Taylor, I saw neither Bromley nor Steiner. I was aware that they left the neighbourhood shortly after their parting with me, and I knew that neither of them had resumed business. I concluded, therefore, that, having settled their involved affairs, they had proceeded to Germany, where, I had often heard him say, Steiner had many rich and influential connections. I endeavoured to exclude the remembrance of them; and had begun to look back upon the fire as a calamity which, morally considered, had probably operated with salutary efficacy upon all the parties concerned except myself. And yet the memory *would intrude* itself upon me sometimes, *nor was I able to* dismiss it.

Taylor and myself were mutually disappointed in each other. I found him a low, grovelling person, who had originally sought to procure my services, not more to forward his own interest than to pursue an old enmity between himself and Bromley, of whom, conceiving that he had secured a ready listener when I first entered his service, he was always speaking in terms of bitter hostility. On the other hand, I believe he had some reason to complain of me. I had lost all alacrity, I evinced no zeal for business. It had not only become irksome to me, but I began to wonder how I could possibly have taken an interest in it at any time.

I had been with Taylor two years, when an event fell out that, in a moment, entirely changed the whole aspect of my future life. I was one evening reading the newspaper, when an advertisement caught my eye. It was to this effect:—"That if any relation of Luke Adams, of Luton in Bedfordshire, were in existence, and he would apply to certain solicitors in Austin Friars, he would hear of something greatly to his advantage." I remembered instantly that Adams was my mother's uncle, to whom she had written, at my father's death, requesting some trifling assistance. Not to dwell upon this part of my narrative, I waited upon these gentlemen in the city, and after considerable delay, and no small difficulty in proving my own identity, was acknowledged sole heir to his very

considerable property, and I took possession accordingly.

I do not think that this sudden change of my condition produced any great moral alteration in me, whether for better or worse. It must be remembered that a man may be virtuous, as the world goes, at a very cheap rate; but vice is an expensive luxury; and to expend money liberally is of itself considered a species of virtue, especially by those who receive it. Without any love of vice for its own sake, or for the sake of any delight it afforded, I plunged once more into dissipation, and pursued the same idle and profitless pleasures with which most men, without other resources than money, are fain to content themselves. That I was not happy, perhaps I need not say; I became more and more conscious every day (I had not felt it so much when I was poor, and compelled to earn my living) of the grievous wrong I had done to Bromley. Bitterly to repent an injury inflicted upon another is a torment that knows no alleviation —that no time will mitigate. But, although conscious of the wrong, I could not repent it until reparation was made to me: that reparation came at last, and repentance followed, and misery henceforward abided with me for ever.

One day I had taken shelter under a gateway from a heavy shower of rain. I had not been standing there many minutes when a woman, meanly

clad, entered hastily, and perceiving me, started back, and involuntarily pronounced my name. I should not have remembered the face—the ravage of *that night* had made a fearful, a hideous change—but the voice was familiar to me.

"Mrs. Steiner!" I exclaimed; but she had turned from me. The tone in which she had uttered my name was the tone of former years, and my heart was touched. I approached her.

"Will you not speak to your servant, madam?" I said.

"Oh! do not say so, sir," she answered; "I am very glad to see you." She trembled, but offered me her hand.

There is no sight in nature more pitiable, more humiliating than that of self-abased poverty. I could not witness it unmoved; I took her hand and pressed it warmly; I inquired after Bromley, whether he was yet living; and asked if *they* still resided with him.

"*I* live with him," she answered. "Mr. Steiner is not with us at present."

"I should very much wish to see Mr. Bromley again," I said earnestly.

Her eyes brightened for a moment. "Should you?" she replied; "but perhaps——" She paused.

"He would not care to see me. Did you mean that? I know his prejudice against me."

"That, Mr. Gibson, has been long ago dispelled.

It would make him happy to see you once more before he dies. He has said so often, but he is ashamed and afraid to meet you."

I prevailed upon her to allow me to conduct her home. She made many excuses, and at length, with a faltering voice, murmured something about the meanness of the lodging. Drawing her arm between mine, we proceeded on our way in silence—my heart was too full to speak—towards a narrow street in Westminster.

"We live here," she said, with a deprecating blush, as she knocked at the door of a miserable dwelling. "If you will wait below for a moment I will prepare my father to receive you."

I was shown into a small room, scantily furnished, on the second floor. When I entered, Bromley came forward to meet me,—but very feebly; and, placing his hand upon my shoulder, he gazed long and earnestly at me, whilst the tears rolled down his face.

"And you have come at last to see me, Mr. Gibson?" he said tremulously. "I do not deserve this kindness from you. Oh! boy, I have wronged you,—but listen,—that villain!"—he looked around, but Mrs. Steiner had left the room,—"that villain, Steiner, set us against you—both of us; he did—he did!"

I placed the old man in his chair, and sat down *by his side.* He was verging upon second child-

hood, but I gathered from him enough to know that I had been the instrument of ruin, of misery, of destitution, and of his present helpless and piteous condition. Steiner had long ago abandoned his wife and child, having converted into money everything he could lay his hands upon, and they had neither seen nor heard from him for years.

I could wish to avoid this part of my confession —I can hardly bear to think upon it even now. More awful circumstances do not so disturb me as the remembrance of that day. I stayed with them for some hours. We talked of bygone days—my days of happiness—but we spoke of them sadly, mournfully, and with regret. At length I informed them of my unexpected possession of a fortune, and abruptly—for I could do it in no other way—expressed my determination of providing for Bromley and his daughter, and of taking the child, who was now grown a fine boy, under my protection.

I can never recall to memory, without agony, the old man, as he tottered from the room, chuckling as he went, to tell the woman of the house, below, that he was a made man again, and that Gibson had brought him back his property; and I groaned in very anguish when Mrs. Steiner fell at my feet, bathing my hand with her tears, and called upon the child to kneel before me, and bless their benefactor. They could not have devised a more dreadful vengeance upon me.

I, too, when I returned home on that night, went upon my knees, not for forgiveness of my crime, but that He would direct me how to atone for it in this world. And I arose, perhaps, a better, if not a happier man.

Peace is, however, preferable to happiness, if it be not in its best sense the same thing; and if an exemption from external influences may be called peace, I enjoyed it for six years after my interview with Bromley and his daughter.

What I had promised to do for them was done, and done promptly. I settled an annuity upon them, which was continued to Mrs. Steiner after the death of her father, and I sent the boy to a boarding-school in the vicinity of London, intending to realise for him the prospects which had been designed for me by my early protector, Mr. Ward.

The world finds it very difficult in many cases to draw the line, and in some even to distinguish between crime and misfortune. I am about to enter upon a circumstance in my life which chiefly partakes of the latter. I cannot bring myself to think otherwise. But it will be necessary to state in a few words how matters stood when this circumstance occurred.

I had been living for the space of six years a secluded and an inoffensive life. I occupied a small detached house at Chelsea, and resided alone; the woman who attended upon me coming every morn-

ing, and returning to her own home at night. T boy spent the chief portion of his holidays with m but at other times, with the exception of an oc sional visit to and from Mrs. Steiner, I neither we to see nor received into my house any human bei I had no friends.

My early attachment for the boy had been renew and he returned my affection. He was now thirte years of age, and, at the time of which I am abc to speak, at school.

CHAPTER V.

I HAD been expecting a letter from Mrs. Stein which she had promised to send me in the evenii It was a letter for her son, to which I wished to a a few lines. It was growing late; my servant h left me, and I was about to retire to bed, whe knock summoned me to the door. Late as it w I concluded that some person had brought the lett On opening the door; a tall, muscular man, wit fur cap on his head, and enveloped in a rough gre coat, stood before me.

"Is Mr. Gibson within?" he inquired.

"He is: my name is Gibson."

"You don't remember me, I perceive," said t man.

"I do not."

"Ay!" he continued; "times are changed

we last met; with you for the better; for the worse with me. My name is Steiner."

I stepped back in astonishment.

"You won't know me now, I suppose?" resumed Steiner; "and I believe you have no reason to care much about me; but I have suffered misfortunes since then."

This was spoken in a tone of humility which almost affected me.

"Nay, Steiner," said I, "I have long ago forgotten and forgiven the past."

"Have you?" he replied quickly. "Mr. Gibson, you have a good heart, and I always thought so, though I didn't always act as if I thought so. But won't you let me step in? I have a favour to beg of you; and I won't detain you long."

I led the way into the parlour, and he sat down. As he took off his cap, and threw back his great-coat, I at once recognised my old enemy. Time had contributed his usual share to the alteration I detected in him; but sordid wants and recourse to miserable shifts and expedients will breed care even in the most callous bosom, and its effects were observable upon his face. He looked ill, also, and exhausted.

"Will you not take some refreshment?" I said. "You appear faint."

"I am so," he replied. "You are very kind. I *will take something.* I have not touched a morsel *to-day.*"

I went downstairs and procured what the pantry contained, which I laid before him.

"You had better take some wine," I said, placing it upon the table.

I watched him in silence as he dispatched his meal, wondering inwardly how he had obtained a clue to my place of abode, and what request he was about to make to me. He thrust the tray from him, and helped himself to a glass of wine, which was presently followed by another.

"You seem to have a pleasant place here, Gibson," said he. "Well, this is a strange world. Who could have supposed, fifteen years ago, that you and I would have been situated as we are now. But you don't drink."

I took a glass of wine. "It has pleased fortune to bestow her favours upon me," said I; "but, after all, fortune——"

"Ah! well; I'm glad of it!" he cried, interrupting me. "I'm glad of it; you deserve it. Here's your health, old boy!"

"I was somewhat startled at this sudden familiarity. I had never admired Steiner in his gayer mood, especially when it had been induced by drink. I knew it of old as the prelude to an ebullition of a totally opposite nature.

"Will you let me know how I can be of service to you, Mr. Steiner?" I said abruptly. "It is growing late."

"So late? Not so very late!" returned Steiner. "Why, the truth is, I am poor, very poor, and I want money."

"You are in want, you say? Well, I can, perhaps——"

"Perhaps!" said he. "Certainly, I should think. Come, more wine: I see you have some on the sideboard."

"Another glass," I answered, producing with reluctance a second bottle, "and we part. Do you mean to say, sir, you are in positive distress?"

"I do," he returned; "I have nothing left in the world—nothing. Yes, this. Do you remember it?" and he produced from his pocket a dagger, the sheath of which was curiously chased, and which had ornamented Bromley's shop from my earliest remembrance. "I have kept it by me for years," he continued, "in case it might be wanted." He threw it upon the table, and seized the decanter.

I could see in his eye at that moment the man I had lost sight of for years—the man who had threatened me when I last saw him. But I had no wish to quarrel with him.

"Have you seen Mrs. Steiner since your return to England?" I inquired.

"No; I have not seen Mrs. Steiner since my *return to England*," said he. "I called at my *former lodgings*, and they informed me of every-

thing. They told me where I might find you, and I preferred calling upon you first."

"Well, Steiner," said I, rising, "I am sorry to hasten you, but it grows very late."

"Ha! ha!" cried he, not heeding me; "I hear you have done something for the boy, and provided for Louisa. Well, it's generous of you; I will say that. She's altered, eh? not quite so handsome? But you always liked her, you dog! I knew that."

I sat down, in utter and mute surprise at the man's baseness.

"And old Bromley's gone too," he resumed. "Well, we must all go! The law of nature they call it."

"I must beg you to defer your business till to-morrow morning," said I in disgust. "I will not be kept up any longer!"

"No, no," returned he decisively; "I can't do that. If Bromley could have deferred his death till to-morrow he would have done so, I dare say; but he couldn't. *I* can't defer my business!"

"What do you want?" said I, peremptorily.

"Money!" answered Steiner. "Come, Gibson; I know you're a good-natured fellow. I want a hundred pounds."

"A hundred pounds!" and I drew back in surprise.

"No nonsense, my gentleman!" cried Steiner, tapping the table with the hilt of the dagger. "You

know, and I know, that you set fire to that house in Wardour Street. You ruined us. You reduced us to beggary. I must have this money!—I must—*must!*"

The old feeling entered into me which I had years ago encouraged, and by whose power I had successfully wrought out my vengeance.

"Must!" said I; "must, Mr. Steiner! That is a word I never obeyed in my life."

"Time you began!" said Steiner with a sneer. "Come, Gibson, you are no match for me; you know it. You tried me once, and you were wanting. You are alone in the house. I have you in my power."

"What do you mean?" said I; but I was not alarmed. "What do you purpose?"

"This!" cried he; and he unsheathed the dagger.

"Your life," said I promptly, "your life, Steiner, will answer it!"

"What is it to me?" he returned. "What is yours to you is the question! Will you let me have the money?"

"No!"

"You will not?"

"No!" I thundered. "Steiner, I shall sell my life dearly! Never shall a beast like yourself extort money from me by force—by intimidation!"

I said *more, but* I know not what, and grappled *with him. He was a* powerful man, but had become

enervated by excess. I learnt that afterwards. And the wine he had taken, although it had stimulated his brutal nature, had deprived him of that advantage which is derived from quickness of eye and directness of aim. I, too, had grown stronger since we were last opposed to each other.

He had wounded me in the arm before I closed with him and wrested the dagger from his hand. The struggle was then short, compressed, and deadly. We fell to the earth together. Steiner's hold upon me seemed to relax—a faintness overcame me—the room appeared to go round rapidly—and I sank into insensibility.

When I recovered my senses, and arose—which I did with difficulty—I found the candles burnt out, and the daylight streaming through the shutters. Why was I here? What had happened? It was a hideous dream! I made an effort to approach the window, but I stumbled over something on the floor. It was Steiner—the lifeless body—the corpse of Steiner! I had killed him! His neckcloth told me that I had strangled him!

CHAPTER VI.

To some natures, human, perhaps I should say physical, considerations are the first that, in cases of emergency, present themselves. My nature was of this kind. What had I done? I had killed a man

in self-defence—one who would have plundered, and who had attempted to murder me. It was justifiable homicide. Who, under the circumstances, could have acted otherwise? Besides, the spectacle before me could not now unnerve me. The excitement of the recent struggle between us had not altogether subsided, and I had suffered so much for years past from another event, which Steiner himself had forced upon me, that I would not permit myself to be overwhelmed by this accident. I felt also that my hatred of Steiner had only lain dormant thus long; that his murderous assault upon me on the previous night had quickened, had revived, and, if possible, had strengthened it; and I felt, ay, even as I gazed upon the lifeless body, that no time, no years passed in this world, could obliterate or destroy it. I now bethought me what course was to be pursued. I must rescue myself from the imputation that might lie against me of having murdered Steiner; I must do more—I must establish the charge against the deceased, and hold up his name and his memory to execration and ignominy. No thought of Mrs. Steiner or of the boy obtruded itself upon me at the moment, or if it did, I rejected it. Justice must be done: I had always loved justice—I had practised it hitherto, and they had felt it.

Thus resolved, I sat myself down in a chair, and *awaited, not* calmly, but callously, the arrival of the

old woman who attended upon me, and who came regularly at seven o'clock. The pain in my arm was great, but that I heeded not; on the contrary, it supplied me with a motive for suppressing any regret I might be weak enough to feel (but there was little danger of that) in consequence of what had occurred.

A sudden thought flashed through my brain. Why was I seated inactive, when prudence pointed out the expediency of alarming the neighbourhood? As it was, I had tarried too long. Every moment of farther delay would materially alter the complexion of the case, as it would present itself to indifferent witnesses. Would they, indeed, believe the story I had to relate? I turned faint and sick when that doubt proposed itself to me. The seclusion in which I had lived was calculated to increase suspicion against me, which doubtless had been long engendered, and Steiner's vengeance would at length be fulfilled.

Were these fears reasonable? I think not; and yet having once, and in an evil moment, entertained them, they grew upon me, and altogether paralysed my faculties. I felt intensely the necessity of immediate action, but was utterly deprived of the power to act.

Hardly conscious of the motive that prompted me, I drew the body of Steiner into the back-room, and covering it with a cloak, thrust it under a sofa,

before which I placed some chairs, and returning to the parlour, I set the furniture hastily in its accustomed order, and retired to my chamber, where I dressed the wound in my arm, washed myself, and endeavoured to counterfeit a calmness which, at any rate, might impose upon my servant.

It was now too late to recede. To decide upon any course of action in trying circumstances is a relief; and the weakness of yielding to imaginary fears, and the difficulty and danger of concealing from the world all knowledge of this unfortunate occurrence, were for a time forgotten. They were too soon impressed upon me, and in a manner I had not foreseen, and could not now avert.

A knock at the door summoned me downstairs. As I proceeded along the passage, I thought I could distinguish the tones of two voices in conversation. I listened, transfixed to the spot with the hideous conviction that they—who, I knew not—were come to search the house in quest of the body which I had concealed, and which, therefore,—for that inference must be invincible,—I had murdered. It was a moment of agonising suspense; but the voices had ceased, the knock was renewed, and I knew it to be that of my attendant.

My agitation must have been but too visible when, on opening the door, I beheld Mrs. Steiner.

"The lady wishes to speak to you, sir," said the old woman, entering.

I motioned her to retire to the kitchen, and turned in silent perplexity towards Mrs. Steiner.

"Good heavens! Mr. Gibson," she exclaimed, "how dreadfully pale you look! What is the matter?"

I might have remarked the same of her also; but I had no power to speak.

"You do not answer," she resumed. "O God! it is—it must be as I suspected!"

"What—what do you suspect?" I dared not look upon her, but retired in confusion into the parlour. She followed me, and sank upon a chair.

There was a vagueness, almost a wildness in her eye, as she glanced hurriedly round the room, which disconcerted me not a little. She looked as though she had expected to see some person whom she feared to meet.

"You have nobody in the house, Mr. Gibson?" she inquired in a half whisper, pointing to the door of the back-room.

"Nobody but my servant, who entered with you," I replied, the blood rushing violently to my face. "You have brought the letter, madam, I suppose, for Frederick?"

"Frederick!"—she gazed upon me listlessly—"O yes, I have! My God! what weakness is this!" and she pressed her hand upon her forehead. "Here it is—I hardly know what I have written."

She drew it from her reticule, and handed it to me.

"Oh, Mr. Gibson," she resumed, as I sat, my eyes bent vacantly on the superscription, "I have been so alarmed!"

"Indeed! What has alarmed you, Mrs. Steiner?" The letter dropped from my hand.

"He has been here—your looks tell me so!" she exclaimed. "My husband—Steiner has been here!"

I arose suddenly. "No, no—he has not been here; I have not seen him, as Heaven is my witness. Why should you think so?"

This assurance appeared to relieve her.

"He called yesterday at my former lodging," she continued; "the woman saw him, and would not tell him where I resided."

"Compose yourself," I said; "he will not be able to discover your lodging—I am sure he will not. What motive," I added, "can induce him to seek me?"

"Oh, sir!" she replied, "he inquired your address of the woman, and she told him."

"He will not venture to see me, depend upon it," I said hastily. "Be calm, I beseech you, and go home now; you have nothing to fear from him."

Mrs. Steiner, while I was speaking, sat with her hands clasped, and her eyes raised to mine. She *burst into tears* when I had concluded.

"*Mr.* Gibson," she exclaimed, "you will think

me a foolish, weak woman, but I hardly dare home. I know I shall hear something—I certain of it—it is horrible to think of! I had s a dream last night!"

"My dear madam," said I, interrupting h "this is indeed weakness. Are you the slave empty and unmeaning dreams?"

"Ha!" she cried, starting from the chair, "so body is coming to the door!—I hear his step o side!" and she listened with an appearance intense anxiety that almost equalled my own.

It was a double knock at the door. Who co it be? A short interval of fearful suspense s ceeded.

"A Mr. Hartwell wishes to see you, sir," said servant, entering the room.

An exclamation of terror was about to burst fr the lips of Mrs. Steiner, but she checked it. S flew towards me, and held me by the arm.

"Who is this man, Hartwell?" I said. "I not know him. Tell me, do you know him?"

She motioned me to close the door. "He v the friend—no, no,—the companion of Mr. Stein and brought us to misery. It was he who Frederick into vices that—oh, sir! I must not him for the world! Where shall I conceal myse O yes! in here."

"Not there!—not there!" I exclaimed, se her hand as she was about to open the door

back-room. "Tell the gentleman," I turned to the servant, "that I will see him directly."

"I would not he should see me *here* for the world!" she cried. "Oh! Mr. Gibson, you must permit me——"

I had no strength to struggle with her. The door was opened.

"Sit there," I whispered, pointing to a chair. "Do not stir—promise me, swear you will not stir."

"My God! how strange!—my dream last night! —so like this—it *was* this!"

I fled into the parlour at these words, and threw myself into a chair. In a moment more a tall man of genteel appearance walked into the room.

"I beg pardon for the liberty I have taken, sir," said he; "my name is Hartwell. I fear I find you extremely unwell."

"I am so," I answered faintly, as I motioned him to take a seat. "What may be your business with me, Mr. Hartwell?"

"Why, sir," said he, "my friend, Steiner, called upon you last night."

"No, no, he did not," I exclaimed hastily.

Hartwell smiled, and shook his head. "Pardon me, my dear sir," he returned blandly, "I am certain that he did, because I accompanied him to the door."

"*Hush!* hush! do not speak so loud," and I *rose from* my seat; "I have an invalid in the next

room. I thought," I added, hesitating—(I wonder even now at the presence of mind which enabled me to hit upon that)—"I thought, perhaps—for all Mr. Steiner's acquaintance are not friends—that he might not wish you to know he had been here."

"Oh! Lord bless you, no," said Hartwell; "we are very good friends, I assure you. He promised to call upon me after he had seen you, and I am surprised he should not have kept his word with me. Pray, Mr. Gibson, when did he leave you?"

"Leave me!"—I started—"oh, about two hours ago."

"Very strange!" cried Hartwell; "he was to sail for Hamburgh this morning."

"He is gone, then, no doubt." This propitious intimation, unexpected as it was, eased me beyond expression. Hartwell, however, seemed greatly perplexed.

"I cannot think he would deceive me," he said at length. "Will you allow me to inquire, sir, whether Mr. Steiner had reason to be satisfied with the result of his visit to you?"

"I do not understand——"

"He came to borrow money, I think," he continued; "did he succeed, Mr. Gibson?"

"He did."

"D— the fellow! it's so like him. And yet,"—he mused,—"I cannot but believe I shall see him

. Good morning, Mr. Gibson; I am sorry to
e troubled you."
. know not how I bore my part in the foregoing
versation; not with much address or self-posses-
ı, I suspect; for I detected Hartwell gazing at
with seeming surprise upon one or two occasions.
ıanked God when he was well gone. It was not
ly I should see him again. Steiner had sailed
Hamburgh; he would conclude so, and I should
r no more of him.
Nothing now remained but to dismiss Mrs. Steiner
speedily as possible, and afterwards to dispose of
body so secretly that it should never see the
ıt. It would be well to treat Mrs. Steiner's
ue apprehensions with levity, lest at some future
e, hearing no tidings of her husband, she might
led to couple, and perhaps to connect, my ex-
ne confusion of manner with the date of Steiner's
ected appearance in London, and to infer thence,
speedily to conclude, that I was in some
asure the cause of his absence. *She* never
ıld have suspected me of having murdered him,
elt assured of that; and this conviction sufficed
ortify me against the short scene that was, as I
ieved, about to ensue between us.
I had opened the door softly. O God! what a
ctacle encountered me when I was about to enter
room. She had removed the chairs from
re *the sofa,* and was at that moment kneeling, or

rather crouching, on the ground. Leaning forward, supported on one hand, every limb of her body quivering with the agony of prophetic fear, her other hand was stretched forward, and was about to grasp the cloak that concealed the remains of her husband. Ha! she had already laid hold upon it ere I could rush forward to prevent her.

I grasped her shoulder with the fury, with the strength of a wild beast. She flung herself backward, drawing the cloak with her towards her. The body—the face had been seen!

It was not a scream—a shriek—I shall never hear its like again in this world. The echo of it—the imitation, if such could be—of that dreadful appeal or imprecation, would make a madman of me now. Its remembrance shuts out hope from me for ever.

And yet the instinct of self-preservation was then present to me. I threw the cloak once more over the body, replaced the chairs, and, raising the senseless form from the floor, carried it into the parlour before the servant, who had been alarmed by the outcry, could make her appearance. The old woman speedily busied herself in applying those common remedies which are always at hand, but which are not always efficacious; nor were they in this instance.

"I will carry her to my own room," said I. "She will get better presently, I dare say."

"What is the matter with the lady?" inquired the woman. "Is she often so?"

"She is mad," said I impressively; "Mrs. Watkins, mark me—she is mad. You must not heed what she says. She will, perhaps, rave and utter strange things. You must pay no attention to them."

So saying, I took Mrs. Steiner in my arms, and, followed by the woman, conveyed her to my chamber.

"Had not a doctor better be sent for?" suggested the woman. "She still remains insensible."

"No; no occasion for one at present," I replied; "she is thus sometimes for hours. Do not leave her side, and when she comes to herself call me."

I retreated downstairs. What I suffered on that day it is past imagination to conceive: a second endurance of it no human being could withstand. I took no sustenance, but remained closed in, in frightful companionship with the body. To wring the hands, to tear the hair, to beat the bosom, were no employments of mine. I felt no remorse; I was not even sorry for what I had done, or for what it had led to; it was sheer, absolute, simple fear. The dread of detection—of conviction—of an ignominious death—it was this, and this alone.

In the afternoon Mrs. Watkins suddenly came to *me, and* beckoned me to follow her. I did so. She

led the way to the chamber. Mrs. Steiner lay on the bed; her eyes were open now, but motionless, and her hands at intervals were convulsively clenched. I observed her in awe-stricken silence for some time.

"Has she spoken yet?" I inquired.

"No; she will never speak again," replied the woman. "It doesn't signify, Mr. Gibson, a doctor must be sent for. I will not permit the poor lady to die without assistance."

I knew not what I said. "To die without assistance!—ha! ha! Doctors are good assistants to death. No—no doctors."

"Shameful!" cried the woman. "You don't know what you're talking about. For Heaven's sake, sir, call in Mr. Greaves! Go for him, dear Mr. Gibson, instantly."

"*I* go for him!" I thought of the body below. "She cannot speak?" The woman shook her head. "Go, then, for Greaves; tell him to come instantly."

"I cannot leave the lady; I ought not, sir," she said in a tone of remonstrance.

"You must!" I exclaimed. "I myself will watch her while you are gone. Be quick! Lose not a moment."

Mrs. Watkins retired in apparent dissatisfaction, but returned shortly with the doctor. He examined her with deep attention and concern for a considerable period. Turning to me, at length he said,—

"Good God, sir! your servant tells me that the lady has been in this state since an early hour this morning, and that you have repeatedly resisted calling in a professional man."

"I did not think, sir——"

"You must be mad not to think."

"I am not mad, sir," said I doggedly.

"Pshaw!" cried Greaves, again returning to the bed. "If she had been bled instantly, she might have been saved," he continued; "but it is useless now."

Greaves now began to interrogate me closely as to any cause or supposed cause of Mrs. Steiner's present state. I could not satisfy him. I had only to say that she had called upon me early on that morning, and that she told me she had been much agitated by hearing that her husband had returned to England, and was now in London. I added, that she had reason to dread any further connection with him.

The doctor heard me with evident distrust. "This can hardly account, sir," he said, "for the state in which I find her. Some sudden shock—some frightful communication——"

"Which," said I, interrupting him, "I did not make."

"Well, sir," he returned, "where are her friends? They have been sent for, of course?"

"*She has* none, that I am aware of."

"Good God! sir, you are a very strange person," cried Greaves in disgust. "Where does she live?"

I satisfied him.

"Now," he continued, "couldn't you easily put on your hat, and tell the good woman of the house to come hither? She perhaps knows more of her friends than you appear to do, or seem disposed to acknowledge."

Greaves uttered the last few words with an emphasis that left me in little doubt as to the construction it was intended I should put upon them. It was necessary that I should cut short this conversation, which I felt, if prolonged, was likely to involve me still deeper in suspicion.

"Mr. Greaves," said I, with a composure for which the doctor was not prepared, and which even surprised myself, forming, as it did, so perfect a contrast to my former restlessness and perturbation; "Mr. Greaves, this lady is, and as been for some years, under my protection. Her only son is also under my care, and is being educated at my expense. I owe it to him, to her, and to myself, not to leave her for one moment on so critical an occasion as the present. If I have done wrong in not applying to you before, I am sorry for it; ascribe it to excess of anxiety on my part, and you will be right in so doing. My servant shall go for the woman of the house at which she resides."

I wrote the address on a card, and gave it to Mrs. Watkins.

"My character will bear investigation, sir," I resumed, when the woman had left the room. "I am known, and where I am known I am respected."

Greaves was deeply impressed, not more by what I had said than by my manner of saying it.

"I see now," he said; "I beg pardon if I am wrong in my conjecture why this unhappy lady should dread the sight of her husband——"

I started and turned pale. "The sight of her husband, sir!"

"I did not mean to offend," said Greaves kindly.

"Ah!" said I, "I see what you mean now." I was willing he should continue in that error.

The doctor shortly left me to prepare something for his patient, which, however, he frankly told me he did not expect would be of much avail, promising to call again at night.

It was now nearly dark; my servant could not return in less than an hour; no time was to be lost. I descended into the garden, and digging a grave in a remote corner, silently committed Steiner's remains to the ground. It was a part of the garden never frequented; and I contrived so to overlay it with old lumber and broken garden-chairs which were strewn about in its vicinity, that nobody could have perceived that any recent labour had been performed *there*.

Mrs. Steiner died on that night, silently, without the utterance of a word. Not a glance revealed to me what she had seen, and what had killed her. I was safe, therefore—safe—that one assurance possessed me.

In the solitude of my own chamber, and on my knees, I thanked Heaven for that. I could not then think on the fearful and mysterious accident which had deprived me of my only friend in the world. The sole depositary of a secret, whose utterance would destroy me, had been taken hence, and I was once more secure. Could it be supposed that any joy could be extracted from such circumstances, then I did rejoice that she was no more.

CHAPTER VII.

If I have dwelt upon no event of my life, since I had occasion to mention Steiner, that has not in some measure referred to, or been controlled by him, it is because there was not one worthy even of the name of incident which he did not directly or obliquely influence. O! that I had left Bromley's service when Steiner first entered into partnership with him! How different my life must, how happy it might have been!

It was shortly after the funeral of Mrs. Steiner that I began to hear that whispers were rife in the neighbourhood respecting me. These surmises—

set afloat, doubtless, by my servant—bore exclusive reference to Mrs. Steiner, and to my supposed treatment of her; some even going so far as to hint their belief that she had not come by her death fairly. Hartwell, also, had called upon me several times pending Mrs. Steiner's funeral; and was, and with reason, much surprised and shocked to hear of her sudden death under such circumstances as I chose to detail to him. He was, if possible, still more surprised to have heard nothing of Steiner; but, as he hinted no suspicions that affected myself —as, indeed, he expressed none at the time—and as, moreover, he perfectly well knew the character and habits of his friend, I did not seek to conceal that he had attempted to extort money from me by threats. I added, however, that being alone and unarmed, I had been constrained to give him the money he required; and I expressed my opinion—an opinion in which Hartwell concurred—that he had set sail for Hamburgh early in the morning, and that we should probably never see him again.

There was a serenity, united with perfect ease, in the manners of Hartwell, that indicated an intimate acquaintance with good society. It is true I knew little of the man, except from the hasty and confused report of Mrs. Steiner; an account which, coupled with the fact of his friendship for her husband, was not *likely to* predispose me much in his favour. But I *knew* well, at the same time, that he was the only

man living whose suspicions, once excited and concentrated upon me, could bring my conduct and character in question. I was in no situation—in no mind likewise—to assist myself at present: he was, or appeared to be, perfectly satisfied with the explanations I had offered; and as he had called upon me often, and unasked on my part, and gradually dropped the name of Steiner altogether, I suffered at first, but soon began to countenance his visits.

In the mean while it became necessary, for more reasons than one, that I should change my residence. Two years had now elapsed since the death of Mrs. Steiner. The surmises in the neighbourhood had subsided; the whispers—if there were any—did not reach my ears; but whenever I walked abroad there was a timid scrutiny of my person on the part of some, and an audacious intentness of gaze from others, that rendered my residence at this place for any longer period inconvenient and irksome. I cannot say that I felt very acutely these indications—for a man who lives out of the world can easily dispense with its good opinion; my private belief being that, were not such good opinion indispensable to an individual's advancement and pleasure in life, he would be little disposed to regard it for its own sake.

My chief reason was one with which the world had nothing to do. It was not when I walked abroad, but at home—in the quietness and solitude

of the house—in the silence of my own memory, and at the mercy of the harrowing scene it conjured up—it was then that I felt, if life and reason were longer to co-exist, I must abandon, fly from the accursed place for ever. Such expiation as horror could afford had been paid long ago; and it was time that the past should be unremembered, if not forgotten.

There was yet another motive. It was a dreary abode for the boy, young Frederick Steiner, when he came home for the holidays. He was now with me; and during his stay I had been laying out plans for his future life in accordance with his own wishes—for I passionately loved the boy. My affection for this lad, which he returned with all the warmth and freshness of a young and generous nature, was one of the inexplicable mysteries of my life. I had no cause to love him, save for his own sake; and there were reasons why I should both hate and fear him; and yet, strange to say, my remembrance of Steiner, as his father, transferred no bitterness to him; or was it that his mother's memory assuaged, destroyed it? I know not. And yet—but it will be told in good time. But little intervenes.

Frederick had expressed a stray desire to enter the army—a destination for him to which I was at *first much* opposed, until at length I was won over *by his* importunities. I had let the house, and was

about to remove to a house in Berners Street on the next day, at which time my nephew—for so I called him—was to depart for the Military College at Addiscombe.

Hartwell was dining with me on that day. I introduced the boy to him. He received him with great kindness; partly, perhaps, out of friendship for his late father, partly out of complaisance to myself.

"No very perceptible likeness, I think?" he observed.

"To his father, none."

"I had not the pleasure of knowing Mrs. Steiner."

"O no! I remember you had not." I should not have mentioned this trivial talk, but that it was adverted to afterwards.

After dinner Hartwell proposed that we should take our wine in the garden. We retired thither.

"After all," said he, casting his eyes around, "although you are, I dare say, quite right in leaving this house of yours, what a pleasant place might be made of it! It is just the thing for a respectable family."

"A family has taken it," I remarked.

"For instance," pursued Hartwell, "you have let the garden run to waste sadly. You 're not much of a florist, Gibson. Look there, at that disgraceful hole in the corner," and he pointed to the spot where I had buried Steiner; "that'll be dug up, and replanted in less than a month, I'll be sworn.

What say you, Master Frederick?" and he turned to the boy. "Shouldn't you like to have a hand in it?"

"Indeed I should," said the boy. "What ails you, uncle? you look ill."

"The air is chilly; the wine has not agreed with me!" I stammered. "Let us go in."

How incredible it seems to me now that I should never have thought of that! I almost felt grateful to Hartwell that he had unwittingly reminded me of it. It seemed as though some special Providence interfered in my behalf, and would not suffer me to meet detection. Suffice it to say, I effectually removed—a frightful employment!—all that could betray me.

I must now pass over several years, merely touching upon one or two points, the omission of which would render this portion of my narrative unintelligible.

Frederick Steiner returned from India at the conclusion of the Burmese war, on a leave of absence for three years. He was grown a very fine young man, of impetuous temper, but of warm affections, and with a noble heart. During the period of his absence I had mixed much in society of a certain class—of that class into which a man is almost necessarily thrown who can find no pleasure in domestic life. An intimacy—it cannot be termed *friendship*—had subsisted all along between Hartwell and myself, founded upon and cemented by the

similarity of our tastes and habits. Among other vices he had imbued me with a passion for gaming, —a passion which, like that of love, is often stimulated rather than destroyed by ill success. I was now in comparatively reduced circumstances; but I had done nothing hitherto to impair my credit, or to compromise my character. Sometimes, indeed, desperate with my bad fortune, I would unadvisedly throw out strange things, which were forgotten the next day by myself, but which, it would seem, had deeply impressed themselves upon Hartwell. They were nothing more than denunciations of human nature in the mass, and doubts as to the wisdom of permitting one's self to be trammelled by moral obligations,—phrases which, I doubt not, every losing gamester relieves himself by uttering.

On Frederick's arrival in England, Hartwell attached himself to him with a closeness almost amounting to pertinacity. He had formerly been in the army; had seen a great deal of the world in all its various and shifting forms; his manners were prepossessing; and his conversation just such as easiest recommends itself to the attention of a young man of spirit and feeling, being free, without grossness; sometimes, although not often, grave, and never dull. I never could exactly account for the great pains Hartwell was at to secure this young man's friendship. He could not hope to gain much money from him; indeed, he never attempted it.

could it be that he was the son of his former friend? No. Hartwell had himself often confessed to me that his intimacy with Steiner had been held together merely by a community of interest.

Be this as it may, I hardly wonder that Frederick should have preferred Hartwell's company to mine. There was little in me to attract to myself the time of a vivacious young man, whose sole pursuit was pleasure; and I had too much affection for him to wish to do so. I had, besides, so full a belief of his affection for me, that the notion of Hartwell's supplanting me was altogether out of the question. They grew, however, more intimate daily; and thus matters went on for some months.

One morning Hartwell called upon me, and solicited my attention to a business, as he called it, of very great importance.

"Have you a mind to make your fortune, Gibson?" said he, with a confident and a confidential smile, that argued some proposition of a novel nature.

I answered in the affirmative.

"You are a man of the world," he resumed; "and, therefore, few words will suffice. I know, also, you are not over particular."

"What do you mean, Mr. Hartwell?" I replied.

"As to the means whereby——" he rejoined.

"So long as those means are——"

"*Safe*," cried Hartwell: "I understand. They *are so.*"

He now opened to me a scheme of villany—a system of plunder, so well laid down, so exquisitely arranged, and entered into the *minutiæ*, the *pros* and *cons*, all that could be urged for and against, so earnestly, and at the same time with so much coolness and deliberation, that I was unable, when he concluded, to consider him in jest.

I took the precaution, however, of putting that question to him.

"In jest? No!" cried Hartwell, in extreme astonishment. "Look ye, Gibson. You have lost large sums of late: you are crippled, I know. I put you in the way of retrieving yourself; and, instead of thanking me, as you ought——"

He paused, in perfect bewilderment at my prolonged gravity.

"You do not seem to understand me," he continued after a while. "Our accomplices—agents, I mean—will manage the whole under my superintendence. You will have nothing to do but to furnish the cash, and that but for a short time."

"I do not know what you have hitherto mistaken me for, Mr. Hartwell," I said at length, "or what, in my recent conduct, has led you to infer that I could be brought into a conspiracy like this."

"How?" cried Hartwell.

"For instance," I resumed, "you yourself are under many pecuniary obligations to me, for which I have never troubled you, and which I now only

mention to prove to you that money cannot tempt me to commit dishonourable actions."

Hartwell sat silent for some time, and bit his lips with vexation.

"You have betrayed me, Mr. Gibson," he said at length.

"How so? Rather, you have betrayed yourself, Mr. Hartwell."

"It 's true, by G—! I have so;" and he arose. "But who could have thought that you—I never would have spoken of it, but you compel me to do so—that you, who have committed crimes that should have hanged you, could have sported a conscience, even in jest, or in your cups?"

I was about to speak.

"Pshaw!" he continued in disgust. "Steiner told me,—and I know it,—that you——"

"Set fire to his house," said I, interrupting him. "It is well he could get one to believe that, not including himself. He could hardly expect that."

"What could he hardly expect?" retorted Hartwell; "to be murdered for it? Perhaps not. And his wife—that tale was well told, Mr. Gibson. Do not turn pale: blush now, and look white at the—elsewhere, I mean. Good morning, sir!"

I let him go in silence. These were empty threats, which he would repent in due time. He *waited* upon me again in the afternoon, and, *expressing* some regret for his former warmth, sounded

me once more respecting his project. I resisted entertaining it, even more strongly than before.

Hartwell was wrought to a pitch of fury by my obstinacy, which appeared to him perfectly incomprehensible. He repeated the same charges, with the addition of others; one, for instance, involving a doubt of the paternity of young Steiner; and left me with threats, as before,—threats which I despised. He had now committed himself. I was assured he *knew* nothing, which his language of the morning, conveying so much truth, spoken at random, had for a moment led me to fear.

I was not mistaken when I foresaw that Hartwell would not dare to bring charges against me publicly which he had no means whatever of substantiating. I had not, however, conceived the possibility of his tampering—of his disposition to do so I was well aware, but of his being permitted to tamper—with young Steiner. A few days, nevertheless, convinced me that he had done so; and a watchful scrutiny of the manners and behaviour of the young man taught me to believe that he had done so successfully; that he had rendered him suspicious, distrustful of me; that, by means of an incongruous collection of charges—for they were so, and would so have appeared to the world at large—he had made himself the too easy instrument of utterly alienating Frederick's affections from his friend, his guardian, and his benefactor.

I watched the young man closely, I have said, and I was confirmed in my suspicions. He knows but little of my nature who supposes I could bear that certainty with patience. His constraint in my presence became more and more manifest; I could see that he felt it more. He was uneasy, embarrassed in my company; I, on my part, was taciturn, gloomy, and morose. I had collected materials on which to act; it was now my purpose to put them into shape.

That he—the only being in the world for whom I cared a rush—against whom the whole world would have weighed as lightly,—that he, who had been indebted to me, as an infant, for his life; as a boy, for his maintenance and protection; as a man, for his station and prospects in the world; who owed me more affection than he could have repaid by gratitude, if he did not repay it, as I had hoped, with affection; that he should have turned against me—silently, without inquiry, without scruple: this was more than I could bear. It stung me; no, no—it maddened me! And yet, what was to be done? No more wild justice,—no more revenge. I could execute that no longer. I strove, for once in my life, to think and to act calmly and dispassionately, and to be directed by the result of sober reflection; and the result of my reflections was madness,—and yet I pondered deeply, too.

Hartwell I despised too much to hate: I con-

temned and forgave him. Steiner was yet very young. I had hitherto given him credit for generosity of nature: inexperienced as he was, the subtle plausibility of a villain might have misled him. I had suffered so much from falsehood heretofore, I would now see what effect truth might have,—the whole truth.

Frederick was too young when his father left England to remember him, and, consequently, he would not regret his loss. His mother had been dead many years. He should know all; the physical calamity that, when injured, converted me into a madman; the injuries I had endured; all—he should know all. If, after hearing, he hated me, could he respect Hartwell?—I had no longer a wish to live. If he was generous he would pity me; if otherwise, he might, if he so pleased, betray me. I made myself up for that, and I was pleased with it.

I met him early on the following morning. He entered the room hastily, looking wild and haggard.

"You were late last night, sir," I remarked.

"I did not come home," he answered vaguely.

"With Hartwell, I presume? He has told you something new respecting me."

"He will tell me no more," said he: "I have heard too much already."

"Not enough," I replied, smiling bitterly.

also have something for your private ear. Sit down, sir!" and I seized him by the arm.

"Let me go!—I must not stay here!" he exclaimed, striving to break from me; but I held him fast.

"Nay, but, Frederick Steiner, you must stay. Promise me that you will hear me patiently: I will not detain you long."

He sat down, covering his face with his hands. "I obey you, sir."

"You must not interrupt me." I said.

Calmly,—for madness is sometimes calm,—and with a studied emphasis,—for I had rehearsed it on the previous night,—I confessed everything, and paused, awaiting his answer.

I noted well the gaze, the immovable gaze, which was lifted up to me when I detailed the circumstances of my first crime; that gaze, which continued without intermission, without alteration, without meaning. I awaited his answer. Some minutes elapsed. I became alarmed; and, rising, took him by the shoulder.

He shook me from him as though I had been a reptile, and bounded to his feet.

"What have I done?" he exclaimed, suddenly recollecting himself. "My great God! what have I done? Come not near me! come not near *me!*"

I approached to pacify him. He seized me by

the shoulders, and, dashing me violently to the ground, rushed from the room. I had scarcely risen from the floor when he returned, and, falling at my feet, clasped my knees.

"Oh, my benefactor, my friend, my father, forgive me!" he exclaimed. "I knew not what I did! What a dreadful, miserable mistake is this! I see it all now. You suspected me of having listened to Hartwell, of having believed him, which I never did. I thought from your manner you felt aggrieved by his calumnies—for calumnies, yes, by Heaven, they were! I met him this morning."

There was a knocking at the door. "Rise! for God's sake, rise!" I exclaimed. "No one should see you thus!"

A young gentleman entered the room.

"Well, Harris?" cried Frederick, and he sprang towards him.

"You must fly!" cried the other. "Hartwell is dead!"

He staggered backward, and fell heavily to the earth.

"What does this mean?" said I, wildly.

"Has not your nephew told you, sir," said Harris, raising his friend, "of the duel between Hartwell and himself this morning? The man is dead. Prevail upon your nephew to fly."

"Yes, I must fly!" cried Frederick, breaking

)m him: "I must fly; but whither, and from
iom? Oh, sir!" and he cast an imploring gaze
wards me, "I am a murderer—a murderer!"

I was affected. He perceived it, and fell upon
y neck; and, taking my hands between his own,
raised and kissed them.

"Oh, my best, my only friend, forgive me! as I
all pray, as I do *now* pray—what did I say?—for
rgiveness for you."

He said no more, but hastened upstairs.

"Is he not rather long gone, sir?" said Harris.
He need make no preparation under circumstances
ke these."

"Gone?—where?" said I. I had not been
eeding the time.

A thought, almost a conviction, flashed across
ıe.

"Run upstairs instantly!" I exclaimed, "or you
ill be too late."

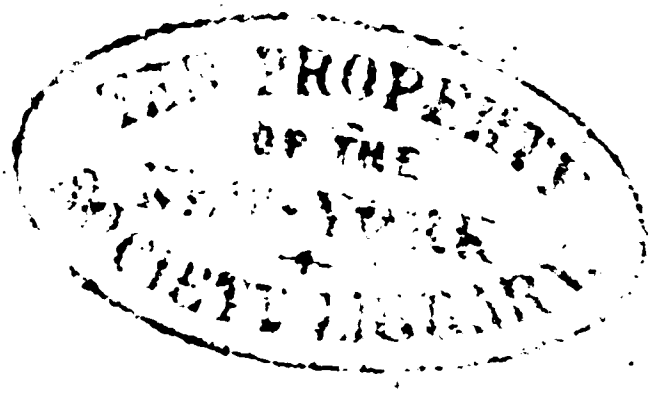
The words were scarce spoken ere the report of a
istol was heard. Harris had come too late. He
ad shot himself through the heart!

What followed I cannot tell. I knew not—I felt
ot that he was dead for months afterwards.

Need I add more? What I have been the
eader will conclude. What I am it were needless
ıd profitless to tell. What I feel—if I feel aught
ow—*may be* best expressed in the words of an

obscure author, whose name I have forgotten, but whose lines I remember :—

"But we are strong as we have need of strength,
Even in our own default, and linger on,
Enduring and forbearing, till at length
The very staple of our griefs is gone,
And we grow hard by custom—'tis all one.
Our joys, deep laid in earth, our hopes above,
Nor hope nor joy disturbs the heart's dull tone;
One stirs it not, nor can the other move,
While woe keeps tearless watch upon the grave of love."



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